# MARVEL MASTERWORKS
# THE INCREDIBLE HULK
## VOLUME 17

**THE INCREDIBLE HULK** Nos. 256-265
ANNUAL Nos. 10-11 & CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS Nos. 1-3
BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA
WITH JOHN ROMITA JR.

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

PRESENTS

VOLUME 17

COLLECTING

THE INCREDIBLE HULK Nos. 256-265

ANNUAL Nos. 10-11 & CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS Nos. 1-3

BILL MANTLO • SAL BUSCEMA

WITH JOHN ROMITA JR.

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# MARVEL MASTERWORKS
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Nos. 256-265, ANNUAL Nos. 10-11 & CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS Nos. 1-3

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HULK CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

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# INTRODUCTION
## BY STEVEN GRANT

I don't quite remember when I met Bill Mantlo or why he started working with me. I fell in with Marvel (an accurate description, but another story for another time) in mid-'78, and by '79 spent a lot of time hanging around the offices, trying to pick up enough work to make a living. But Bill didn't spend a lot of time in the offices. Though it probably happened, I don't remember ever seeing him there once.

Nonetheless, Bill was a Marvel fixture, and by then had been for half a decade, breaking in as a production assistant and colorist before taking on writing a fill-in story for little known backup feature Sons of the Tiger in one of the black-and-white magazines Marvel was publishing back then, *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu*.

The fill-in was an interesting creature, not done much anymore. By the mid-'70s, with Stan Lee having graduated from editor to publisher and spending increasing chunks of time representing Marvel in Los Angeles, the Bullpen system he had set up in the '60s was loosening up some with the company publishing far more titles than ever before and in several different formats. As a result, schedules started to crumble under the increased strain. Missing printing dates meant costly fines levied by the printers who preferred to keep their presses running at maximum capacity. To avoid those, Marvel found itself using reprints when new stories failed to arrive.

This did not go over all that well with the audience. As a result, then-editor-in-chief Marv Wolfman began to solicit fill-ins, one-off issues that could be slotted where needed. Virtually every series needed them, and, as I said, there were a *lot* of series. While taking over Sons of the Tigers full-time and, with artist George Pérez, evolving the strip into the adventures of their creation White Tiger (and Marvel's first Hispanic hero), Bill found his initial Marvel niche: writing fill-ins.

I can relate. When I showed up, fill-ins kept me alive too, and I'm grateful that by then Bill had moved on to more regular work and made some room for me. But, for several years, whenever a fill-in showed up in a Marvel comic, odds were reasonably good that Bill wrote it. There were points when it seemed he was writing almost every book in the line. For a time, it was never all that far from the truth.

When I started working with Bill, I found out how and why, and learned something about being a professional writer for late-'70s Marvel Comics.

As I said, I don't quite recall how it came about. My best guess is it had something to do with Mark Gruenwald, who I'd been collaborating with as co-plotter and sounding board. I can only suspect he recommended me to Bill, who, in addition to his considerable volume of other work, had taken on *Marvel Treasury Edition* #25, a new-content Treasury featuring Spider-Man vs. the Hulk at the 1980 Winter Olympics. I met with Bill early one afternoon at his lovely and fairly palatial Upper West Side apartment, I think on 94th Street west of Broadway (by comparison, I was then living in a relative, if relatively decent, hovel on 80th Street just east of Broadway), and in the process learned Bill's method.

Simply put, Monday through Friday he wrote comics. Systematically. Almost every morning he was in the room he used as his office by 9:30. I don't know whether he had a private office. Whenever I was there, we met in his living room, and he was set up to comfortably write on a sprawling table in his dining room.

This was in the heyday of "the Marvel method," where most if not all Marvel comics were written up as plots first, for the pencil artist to convert into seventeen pages of a drawn comic, the standard story length of the day. The pages were then sent to the writer, who then wrote all the dialogue, marking out placements for captions, sound effects and word balloons either on photocopies or on semi-transparent tissue paper that was taped over the original. After that, barring rewrites, the book wound its way through whatever order of letterer, inker and colorist was most functional in the moment.

From 9:30 a.m. to half past noon every day of the week (given there was enough work to mandate it, and there commonly was) Bill plotted one full comic book. At 12:30 p.m. he took a break for lunch and, I'm told, often a gym visit. He returned to work at 2:00 p.m., and until roughly 6:00 p.m. he'd dialog one full comic book.

Five days a week. Virtually every week.

In other words, Bill was effectively a one-man comics-writing factory. It probably helped that his view of success wasn't writing, say, *Incredible Hulk* or *Spectacular Spider-Man*, though certainly he had long, successful runs on those. It wasn't even co-creating a small litany of original characters like Jack of Hearts, Cloak and Dagger, Darkstar and Rocket Raccoon. It was, specifically, writing for Marvel—an attitude that served him well through a lengthy, packed career.

On *Marvel Treasury Edition* #25, I know he and Mark very briefly discussed the rough plot points. (I'm pretty sure it was Mark's maiden voyage as a full editor, a position he wouldn't hold full-time for another few years, though another title he edited at the time was released first.) Bill and I fleshed it out to a real plot at his place that early afternoon, and my job was putting the plot into writing, filling in the remaining blanks, for Bill to rewrite. (Professional tip: When you're in a time bind, it's almost always easier to rewrite than to write.) I don't know that I'd claim the result among my finest achievements, but it turned out pretty well, and opened up an interesting working relationship.

Bill's run on *The Incredible Hulk* started in early 1980 and went unbroken for the next five years, something of a record for the character at that point. A feeling-out period came with his first efforts, but around the first issue in this volume, he developed a special feel for the book. Of interest is the appearance of the Israeli super hero Sabra in that issue, and of the Arabian Knight (do I really have to tell you what country he represents?) in the next issue. These are the debuts of those characters in Marvel continuity…but not in my continuity. For me they're markers of where the *Contest of Champions* miniseries, also featured in this volume, fits in Bill's career.

It's still a bit disorienting that, these days, *Contest of Champions* is where a sizable segment of the audience know Mark, Bill and I from. At conventions, I'm not infrequently asked now if we knew how big the series would be when we were working on it?

The answer is no. Dirty little secret: When we did it, we didn't even know we were working on *Contest of Champions*.

It all goes back to that *Treasury Edition*. It was never intended to be a standalone. At the time we worked on it, we were also starting work on a corresponding Treasury Edition: Marvel Super Heroes at the 1980 Summer Olympics, scheduled for release six months later. The sequel was a big enough deal that Bill broke one of his cardinal scheduling rules—and Mark and I joined him at his apartment for a very long evening session that went well into the night. This was planned to be the first major "everybody and the kitchen sink" stories Marvel had done since the wedding of Reed and Sue Richards some fifteen years earlier.

I personally had no doubt it'd be a big deal. Among my earliest gigs at Marvel was putting together letter pages—and there was a sizable sect of letter writers who did exactly the same thing: blockprint letters on yellow legal pad sheets that generally read "I really love [character in book I'm writing to]. Please guest star [laundry list of every hero Marvel had introduced to that point]." Really. From a lot of people, not just one. The addresses were from all over. I'd be surprised if any of them knew of each other's existence. But it was clearly a thing. There was a hunger out there for a Marvel mob scene. Believe me, I was keen to be in on this.

Just one big problem faced us: Aside from mostly members of the recently introduced All-New, All-Different X-Men, Marvel didn't have a lot of international heroes to work with, and the Summer Olympics Treasury Edition needed an international cast. Mark and I were tasked with creating some. Adding to his cast of Russian super soldiers, Vanguard and Darkstar, Bill created Ursa Major. Offsite, Mark and I had cooked up our own additions with Mark creating the Arabian Knight, the Collective Man (from China) and Shamrock (from Ireland), while I provided Talisman (from Australia), Le Peregrine (from France) and Blitzkrieg (from Germany). The latter may not have been the most well-considered character I ever created. Mark's then-girlfriend Belinda Glass created Sabra. That was about all we had room for, except…

Bill realized South America was completely unrepresented. So, we spent a couple painful hours dragging through possibilities, throwing around names like the Ocelot. It wasn't our finest moment. Finally, I dragged out a Spanish-English dictionary and just tried to brainstorm words, eventually landing on Defensor. It was late, we were done. Defensor it was.

Mark and I spent the next week fleshing out a plot, figuring out the fight brackets. We had the brilliant idea of avoiding any of the expected combinations in favor of unanticipated ones. Bill then rewrote the plot, keeping the story intact but changing, I think, all of our combos. I recall being a bit peeved at the time, but, in retrospect, Bill was right. It was a project for the audience, not us.

John Romita Jr., a hot new prospect at the time, penciled it. Everything was going great.

Then Russia invaded Afghanistan. In protest, America abruptly pulled out of the 1980 Summer Olympics, based in Moscow, and, suddenly, we were sitting on a dead-end story ready to be buried in a drawer and collect dust.

In the short run, though, it provided Bill with his own small cast of characters he could use at will on his *Incredible Hulk* run, his own little mythology within the Marvel Universe. To some extent, the earlier stories in this volume are classic Hulk structure, the stuff the character thrived on for years, and, not coincidentally, the structure of his contemporaneous TV show: On the run from hunters, trying to hide both his identities, scientist Bruce Banner becomes entangled in various lives until some danger triggers his transformation into the misunderstood Hulk, forcing Banner to move on, rinse and repeat. Individually, these are entertaining enough stories, but a funny thing happens when read as a piece: They get better. He and artist Sal Buscema, one of the more unfairly unsung writer/artist teams in comics history (they were simultaneously producing the very popular *ROM: Spaceknight*), are so good with the formula you forget it's there. What hits you instead is a strong run of really good Hulk stories. (I wrote a little *Incredible Hulk*, for Roger Stern as well as with Bill, and, trust me, doing a good job of it is a lot harder than it looks.) Maybe that's why Bill, with Sal, lasted years on a book that traditionally burned out writers at a pretty rapid pace. Bill was maybe not the flashiest of writers, he never got much attention from the comics press, but he had a real gift for knowing what a book needed, and what the audience wanted, and providing it.

Even so, there's a sense by the end of this volume that Bill is quietly bristling against the formula and looking for something else. The worldwide road trip slowly gives way to reunions with the old school Hulk supporting cast—Glenn Talbot, Rick Jones and the Teen Brigade (a real blast from the Hulk's earliest days) and Betty Ross—as Bill increasingly intersects with the Marvel Universe at large through villains old and new, and quietly opens a window on what will become the main focus of the rest of his run: the inner psyche of the Hulk.

But that's another story for another day. There's plenty to enjoy here on its own merits.

Oh, yeah. Remember that dead Marvel Super Heroes at the 1980 Summer Olympics project? A couple years after it got shelved, then-editor-in-chief Jim Shooter decided it was time Marvel test out the new miniseries format that was then starting to gain popularity among fans. Marvel's upper management, presumably more dubious about the prospects, agreed to let him, but were reluctant to budget any money for it. In other words, if he could cook up a miniseries they didn't have to pay for, he was welcome to give it a shot.

Normally, that would mean reprints—at that point about the same thing as declaring the venture a failure—but, as luck would have it, there happened to be this drawer holding some 64 pages of unused comics pages featuring nearly every character in the whole Marvel Universe…

Jim brought in Bill and John Romita Jr. to do a little touchup and transition work to transform a 64-page standalone into three 22-page issues—seems to me there were a couple characters who had to be turned into other characters for continuity reasons, but I forget who—and, voila!

*Contest of Champions*. The first of many, many Marvel miniseries and the inspiration for a raft of subsequent "mass team-up" series, like the famous *Secret Wars*. Did we know it would become as big a deal as it was? Even then, I knew it would do well, but I didn't have any special sense it would eventually be considered something of a classic. I never got any sense Bill or Mark did. Near as figured it was, like most things, just one more project that came out, had its day, then gave way to a million other comics.

Now? People like to give me credit when I meet them, and I'm happy to accept it, but…for the record?

It was mostly the quiet, professional genius of Bill Mantlo. Credit where credit's due.

**2022**

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

JR.JR./AM

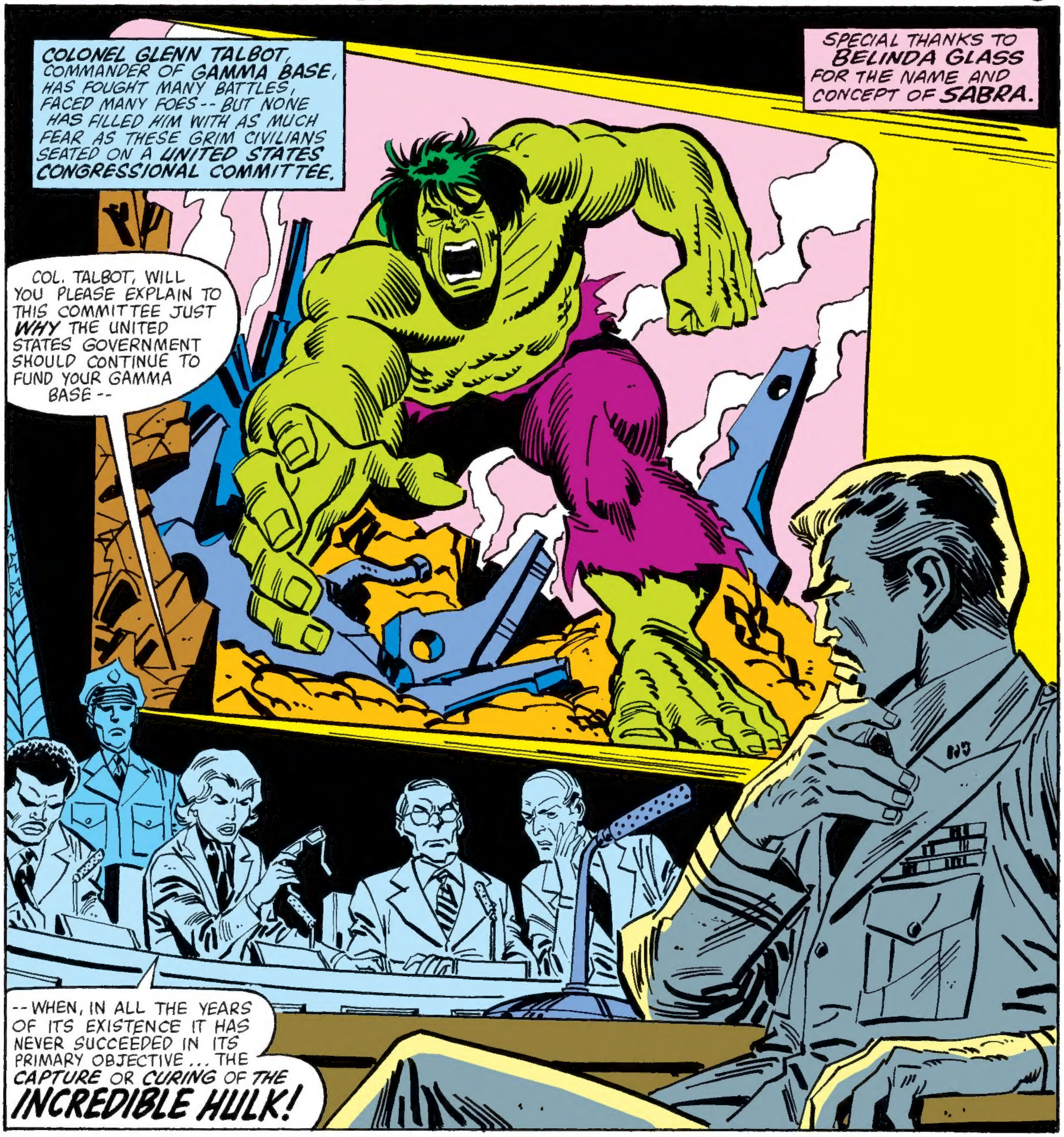
**POWER and PERIL in the PROMISED LAND!**

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered *Fury*—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

**Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®**

BILL MANTLO / WRITER | SAL BUSCEMA / ARTIST | JIM NOVAK / LETTERS | BOB SHAREN / COLORS | ALLEN MILGROM / EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

# POWER IN THE PROMISED LAND!



COL. GLENN TALBOT IS A MAN UNDER FIRE IN A WAR OF WORDS, STAGED ON A SHIFTING BATTLEGROUND OF POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY, WHERE BUDGETS SUBSTITUTE FOR BULLETS. BEING A SOLDIER, HE DOES NOT COMPLAIN BUT FIGHTS BACK AS BEST HE CAN.

REGARDLESS OF WHETHER GAMMA BASE HAS PRODUCED RESULTS OR NOT, CONGRESSWOMAN MESSINGER, THE HULK IS STILL A NATIONAL ***MENACE!***

THESE SLIDES SHOW...

COLONEL, WE ALL HAVE BEEN HEARIN' THAT STORY FOAH YEAHS FROM YOU MILITARY MEN! AH DO NOT IMPUGN THE INTEGRITY OF YOAH MISSION!

I MERELY QUESTION THE WAY IN WHICH YOU ALL ARE GOIN' ABOUT IT!

YOUR PREDECESSOR, GENERAL THADDEUS ROSS, SUFFERED A NERVOUS COLLAPSE RECENTLY, DIDN'T HE, COLONEL?

"THUNDERBOLT" ROSS SPENT A GOOD PORTION OF HIS LIFE CHASING DOWN THE HULK WITHOUT MUCH HELP FROM CONGRESSIONAL DOVES... "SIR"!

WE RESPECT YOUR LOYALTY TO A SUPERIOR OFFICER, COLONEL. BUT I MUST URGE YOU TO WATCH YOUR TONE -- OR I SHALL HAVE TO CITE YOU FOR CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS.

HULK BUSTERS

MCF 1

COL. TALBOT STIFLES A RESPONSE, AS A SLIDE OF ***PROJECT GREENSKIN*** -- THE ORIGINAL "HULKBUSTER BASE -- FLASHES ON THE SCREEN.

IT REVIVES MEMORIES AMONG MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE AS WELL.

THEY'RE REALLY RAKING YOUR EX-HUSBAND OVER THE COALS, BETTY.

GLENN'S BEING BLAMED FOR EXCESSES HE INHERITED FROM MY FATHER'S COMMAND, RICK.

RICK JONES AND BETTY ROSS COULD NO MORE MISS THESE HEARINGS THAN THEY COULD DENY PARTICIPATION IN THE STORY OF THE MAN-MONSTER MEN CALL ... THE HULK!

PROJECT GREENSKIN WAS A PURELY ***MILITARY*** OPERATION, COLONEL -- YET IT ***TOO*** FAILED TO SUBDUE THE HULK!

BLAST IT, THE HULKBUSTER BASE WAS ***ARCHAIC!*** GAMMA BASE SUPERCEDED IT!

INSTEAD OF CATCHING THE HULK, WE CONCENTRATED ON GAMMA RAY RESEARCH IN THE HOPES OF ***CURING*** HIM!

NEITHER APPROACH SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE, COLONEL.

INDEED, OUR RECORDS SHOW THAT ALL THIS HEAH GAMMA RAY RESEARCH HAS ACCOMPLISHED PRECIOUS LITTLE -- 'CEPT MAYBE TURN A RESPECTED PSYCHIATRIST INTA A GREEN-HAIRED BODYBUILDER!

DR. LEONARD SAMSON EXPOSED HIMSELF TO GAMMA RADIATION WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION, CONGRESSMAN...

5000 LBS

EXACTLY! THERE SEEMS TO BE AN AWFUL LOT OF ***ANARCHY*** RAMPANT AT GAMMA BASE, COL. TALBOT--AND AN AWFUL LOT OF MONEY BEING SPENT FOR DUBIOUS PURPOSES!

MESS

CONGRESSWOMAN MESSINGER, I--!

BUT GLENN TALBOT HAS NO WORDS WITH WHICH TO ANSWER.

HE KNOWS THAT EVERYTHING DONE AT GAMMA BASE WAS DONE TO RID THE WO. LD OF THE MENACE CALLED THE HULK.

BUT IF THESE PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE--AS HE DOES--THAT THE HULK MUST BE DESTROYED, THEN NOTHING HE CAN SAY WILL CHANGE THEIR MINDS.

THEY WILL DECIDE THEIR COURSE OF ACTION, JUST AS HE MUST DECIDE HIS... FOR THE GOOD OF THE NATION.

AH ADJOURN THIS HEARIN' UNTIL TOMORRAH MORNIN! THANK YA FOAH YOAH TESTIMONY, COL. TALBOT.

KLAK!

THE HEARING OVER, THE VISITORS FILE FROM THE COMMITTEE ROOM...

DO YOU THINK CONGRESS WILL REALLY VOTE TO CUT OFF FUNDS FOR GAMMA BASE, BETTY?

THE COMMITTEE WILL ISSUE THEIR REPORT IN A FEW DAYS, RICK. WE'LL KNOW-- THE ***WORLD*** WILL KNOW--THEN.

INDEED, WITHIN THE WEEK THE WORLD DOES KNOW THE INTENT OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE REGARDING THE JOINT MILITARY/CIVILIAN RESEARCH COMMAND CALLED GAMMA BASE.

NEWS

NEW YORK POST
NO $ FOR HULK BUSTERS

DAILY BUGLE
CONGRESS CUTS FUNDS FOR GAMMA BASE

NEW YORK TIMES
FUNDS FOR GAMMA BASE CUT OFF

WBC

LIFE
GAMMA DOOMED

TODAY CONGRESS DEFUNDED GAMMA BASE...

TIME
U.S. GAMMA BASE CUT

THERE ARE THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE NEWS MORE AVIDLY THAN MOST. RICK JONES READS OF IT IN A COFFEE SHOP WHERE HE IS ENTERTAINING.

WOW! THEY REALLY DID IT!

BUT DOES THIS MEAN THEY'RE GONNA STOP *HUNTING* THE HULK?

SOMEWHERE OVER THE COLORADO ROCKIES, BETTY ROSS WONDERS THE SAME THING.

GLENN MUST BE CRUSHED--TAKING OVER THE HULK-HUNTING CRUSADE FROM DADDY WAS ALWAYS HIS DREAM. WHY DO BOTH MY FATHER AND MY EX-HUSBAND HATE THE HULK SO?

COULD IT BE BECAUSE *I* HAPPEN TO STILL BE IN LOVE WITH THE *MAN* INSIDE THE MONSTER?

POOR BRUCE BANNER! I HOPE THE CLOSING OF GAMMA BASE MEANS THAT THEY'LL FINALLY LEAVE HIM ALONE!

DEVIATING FROM HER LOGGED COURSE, BETTY ROSS DROPS A PARCEL OVER A SEEMINGLY UNINHABITED MOUNTAIN VALLEY.

IT CONTAINS MEDICINE, BOOKS... AND A NEWSPAPER.

ITS RECIPIENTS ARE A RACE OF ANIMAL-EVOLVED CHANGELINGS, WHOSE EXISTENCE IS KNOW ONLY TO A HANDFUL OF HUMANS--ONE OF WHOM, FRED SLOAN, HAS CHOSEN TO DWELL AMONGST THEM.

IS THIS NEWS OF SOME IMPORTANCE TO THE BIOGRAPHY YOU ARE WRITING ABOUT THE HULK, FRED?

THE SHUTDOWN OF GAMMA BASE?! I'LL SAY IT IS, WOODGOD!

IT MEANS A WHOLE NEW *CHAPTER*--AND THE *END* OF AN *ERA*! 14

LET US NOW TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE REACTIONS ON GAMMA BASE, ITSELF.

AT THE BASE HOSPITAL, LEONARD "DOC" SAMSON RELATES THE NEWS TO HIS PATIENT-- GENERAL THADDEUS "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS.

THIS COULD CAUSE THE OLD MAN TO HAVE A RELAPSE-- BUT I HAD TO BREAK IT TO HIM BEFORE HE HEARD THE BASE SCUTTLEBUTT.

SO THEY'VE TAKEN GAMMA BASE AWAY FROM ME, DISMANTLED MY DREAM? WHAT'S LEFT FOR THIS OLD SOLDIER EXCEPT RETIREMENT?

IN THE CORRIDORS OF GAMMA BASE, FEELINGS OF LOYALTY AMONG THE STAFF RUN HIGH.

CONGRESS LEAKED THEIR REPORT TO THE PRESS BEFORE EVEN NOTIFYING THE COLONEL!

HE'S BEEN LOCKED INSIDE HIS OFFICE ALL DAY.

WAITING FOR OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION, I WOULD GUESS.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN, LT. PERRIWINKLE, AND DR. MAXWELL ARE ALL RELATIVELY **NEW** TO GAMMA BASE. THEY DO NOT LOOK FORWARD TO BEING REASSIGNED.

MEANWHILE, BEHIND THE DOORS OF THE BASE COMMANDER'S OFFICE...

I'M SORRY THAT REPORT WAS LEAKED, COLONEL TALBOT. THE PRESIDENT EXTENDS HIS REGRETS.

HE DIDN'T FEEL **SORRY** ENOUGH TO CALL IN PERSON THOUGH, MR. VICE-PRESIDENT?

I DIDN'T HEAR THAT, COLONEL. WE MUST HAVE A BAD CONNECTION.

YES, SIR. THANK YOU FOR CALLING, SIR.

CLICK

CIVILIANS!

THEY THINK THEY CAN END THE MENACE OF THE HULK WITH AN ACT OF CONGRESS!

I ALONE KNOW HOW DANGEROUS... HOW DEADLY THE HULK CAN BE...

--AND, COMMAND OR NO COMMAND, I WON'T **REST** UNTIL I SEE HIM **DEAD!**

THE CLAMOR CAUSED IN THE STATES BY THE CLOSING OF GAMMA BASE IS MUTED AS ONE CROSSES THE VAST ATLANTIC. HERE, IN THE ISRAELI PORT CITY OF TEL AVIV, WHILE THEY HAVE **HEARD** OF THE MONSTER THE AMERICANS CALL THE HULK, THEY REALLY DO NOT **BELIEVE** THAT SUCH A CREATURE EXISTS.

THEY ARE ABOUT TO BE CONVINCED.

AFTER WEEKS AT SEA, THE FREIGHTER, STAR OF DAVID, RETURNS HOME.

<PREPARE TO UNLOAD CARGO, LADS!>*

<AYE-AYE, CAPTAIN!>

*ALL DIALOGUE TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW --AL.

<RAISE WINCHES!>

AS HATCHES ARE UNBATTENED, ALLOWING FRESH AIR INTO MUSTY CARGO HOLDS, THE CREAK OF WINCH-CHAINS SIGNALS THAT THE UNLOADING HAS BEGUN.

THE STAR OF DAVID CARRIES MEDICINES, FOODSTUFFS, CLOTHING ... AND A STOWAWAY!

NO ONE ABOARD SHIP IS AWARE OF HIS PRESENCE. HE HAS SCARCELY LEFT THE HOLD, SAVE WHEN DRIVEN FORTH BY HUNGER.

HIS FORAGING FOR FOOD WAS ALWAYS UNDERTAKEN IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT AND WITH THE UTMOST STEALTH!

AND HE WAS QUICKLY DRIVEN BACK TO THE HOLD BY THE INCREDIBLE SEASICKNESS THAT HAS WRACKED HIS FRAIL FORM!

HE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID DISCOVERY!

TCHIK

NOW IT SEEMS THAT ALL HIS PRECAUTIONS WILL HAVE BEEN FOR NAUGHT.

WHRRMM

WHHHRRRRRRRRRMMMMMMMM

HUNH? WHAT?!

MOVING?

SOME KIND OF *NET* AROUND ME!

W-WE MUST HAVE REACHED A PORT! THEY KNOW I'M IN HERE--AND THEY'RE TRYING TO *CAPTURE* ME!!

ARRGH!

(I--I AM... BUT SOMETHING INSIDE THE CARGO BALE IS MAKING IT LEAP ABOUT AS IF POSSESSED BY THE VERY DEVIL!)

THE WINCH OPERATOR HAS CHOSEN AN APT METAPHOR.

(THE WINCH-- IT'S SHAKING! HOLD IT STEADY!)

FOR THE CARGO BALE SUDDENLY EXPLODES FROM WITHIN AS IF DESTROYED BY A SAVAGE DEMON!

KSH

TRAK

THE STOWAWAY IS NO LONGER SEASICK, NO LONGER WEAK FROM HUNGER, NO LONGER SCARED OF DISCOVERY! HE IS ALSO NO LONGER **HUMAN!**

**DR. BRUCE BANNER'S** FEAR AND PANIC HAVE CAUSED HIS PULSE TO QUICKEN, HIS IRRADIATED BLOOD TO RACE THROUGH HIS VEINS, TRIGGERING HIS TRANSFORMATION INTO...

**THE INCREDIBLE HULK!**

MEN TRY TO CATCH HULK IN NET-- BUT HULK WILL **SMASH!**

(BEARD OF THE PROPHET--!)*

(EMERGING FROM THE HOLD --IT'S A **MONSTER!**)

*ALSO TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC--AL.

POLICEWOMAN RUTH BEN-SERA IS ONE OF THE FIRST TO RESPOND TO A DISTRESS CALL FROM THE DOCKS.

IT *IS* A MONSTER -- SNARLING THREATS IN ENGLISH!

I WOULD PREFER TO SUBDUE THE CREATURE *ALONE*, WITHOUT ENDANGERING OTHERS--

-- BUT MY DUTY DEMANDS I REPORT THIS DISTURBANCE!

POLICEWOMAN BEN-SERA'S CALL QUICKLY PROCURES REINFORCEMENTS.

<THE MILITARY? BUT I NOTIFIED MY POLICE PRECINCT--!>

<YOU DID RIGHT, POLICEWOMAN-- BUT FROM YOUR DESCRIPTION, WE KNEW THE BEAST COULD BE NONE OTHER THAN THE AMERICAN *HULK*!!

<OUR INTELLIGENCE REPORTS CLASSIFY THE CREATURE AS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL, SUPREMELY SAVAGE, AND CAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING ONLY ONE LANGUAGE...>

<*BRUTE FORCE!*>

THE ISRAELI MILITARY OPENS UP ON THE MAN-MONSTER WITH EVERY WEAPON AT THEIR DISPOSAL!

NOT ONLY DO THEY FURTHER ENRAGE THE JADE GIANT--

SKRAK

--THEY ALSO BRING HIM DOWN TO EARTH!

HULK DOES NOT *KNOW* WHERE HE IS! HULK DOES NOT *CARE*!

ALL HULK KNOWS IS THAT WHEREVER HULK GOES, PUNY SOLDIERS *SHOOT* AT HULK!

HULK DOESN'T *LIKE* IT AND HULK WILL TEACH SOLDIERS TO *STOP* IT... *NOW!*

<THE CREATURE'S STILL COMING! CALL IN THE *TANKS!*>

TANKS? NO! THIS ENTIRE AREA WILL BE DEVASTATED! I--I MUST ATTEMPT TO STOP THIS HULK... AS *SABRA!*

*IN THE SHADOWS BEHIND SOME CARGO BALES, POLICEWOMAN BEN-SERA BEGINS TO REMOVE HER UNIFORM.*

*UNFORTUNATELY, THOSE SAME CARGO BALES ARE DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF THE ONCOMING HULK!*

HULK DOESN'T UNDERSTAND SOLDIERS-- DOESN'T KNOW WHY THEY WANT TO HURT HULK--

WHROM!

--BUT HULK DOESN'T NEED TO UNDERSTAND... TO *SMASH!*

*AND WHATEVER IS IN THE HULK'S WAY USUALLY DOES NOT REMAIN IN HIS WAY FOR LONG!*

OHH! TH-THE CARGO BALES-- CRASHING BACK UPON ME! NO TIME TO GET AWAY--!

*WHATEVER POLICEWOMAN BEN-SERA INTENDED TO DO TO OPPOSE THE INCREDIBLE HULK MUST, FOR THE MOMENT, BE THE SUBJECT OF CONJECTURE.*

*THERE IS NO QUESTION, HOWEVER, AS TO WHAT THE ENRAGED HULK INTENDS TO DO ABOUT THE FORCES ARRAYED AGAINST HIM!*

GNNAARGHH!

WELL, SOLDIERS? WILL YOU LEAVE HULK ALONE *NOW*?

〈Y-YOU'VE SCATTERED MY ENTIRE PLATOON-- DESTROYED OUR VEHICLES WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!〉

〈YOU *ARE* A *MONSTER!* K-KEEP BACK!〉

HULK DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT SOLDIER IS SAYING--BUT HULK UNDERSTANDS *BULLETS!*

〈N-NOOOO!〉

BULLETS ARE MEANT TO *HURT* HULK!

BUT *NOTHING* CAN HURT HULK LIKE HULK CAN HURT YOU! SO LEAVE HULK ALONE, SOLDIER! DO YOU UNDERSTAND? LEAVE HULK *ALONE!!!*

THE ISRAELI COMMANDANT DOES *NOT* UNDERSTAND THE HULK'S LANGUAGE--

--BUT THE MONSTER'S *MEANING* IS QUITE INESCAPABLE!

YES, YOU UNDERSTAND HULK *NOW!*

SOLDIER WILL LEAVE HULK ALONE!

STRIDING AWAY FROM THE STUNNED SERVICEMAN, THE JADE GIANT SEEKS THE SHADOWS OF A DOCKYARD ALLEY-WAY.

HE IS ONLY DIMLY AWARE THAT HE IS NO LONGER IN THE COUNTRY OF HIS ORIGIN...

...AND HE IS TOTALLY UNCONCERNED OVER THE CHAOS HIS IMPORTED SAVAGERY HAS CAUSED!

BEHIND A CLUSTER OF CARGO BALES, POLICEWOMAN RUTH BEN-SERA COMES TO.

WH-WHAT HIT ME? OH, THE MONSTER--THE GREEN-SKINNED CREATURE THAT OFFICER CALLED... THE HULK!

SWIFTLY SCANNING THE DOCKYARD, THE POLICEWOMAN DISCOVERS THAT...

HE--HE'S GONE--LEAVING A SWATH OF DESTRUCTION IN HIS WAKE!

THE MILITARY ARE IN NO SHAPE TO GO AFTER THE HULK! THAT LEAVES **ME** TO STOP THE MONSTER BEFORE HE MENACES THE REST OF TEL AVIV!

NOT AS POLICEWOMAN RUTH BEN-SERA, OF COURSE...

(BUT AS **SABRA***, SUPER HEROINE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL!)

QUILLED CAPE STREAMING BEHIND HER, THE FEMALE FURY SOARS INTO THE SKIES OF TEL AVIV!

SHE IS DETERMINED TO PRESERVE HER HOMELAND FROM THE RAVAGES OF THE HULK!

דמיון נפלא ישראי

*EDITOR'S NOTE: THE WORD **SABRA** DENOTES A NATIVE-BORN ISRAELI, THE NAME DERIVED FROM AN INDIGENOUS FORM OF FRUIT--A PRICKLY PEAR POSSESSED OF A SWEET INTERIOR, AND A SPINY OUTER SURFACE TO PROTECT IT FROM ITS ENEMIES.

BUT THE HIGH-FLYING SABRA IS IN SEARCH OF A SAVAGE GREEN POWERHOUSE... **NOT** A HAGGARD, STUMBLING, PALE-SKINNED AMERICAN SCIENTIST!

WHERE IS HULK? WHY IS HULK HERE?

ALL HULK KNOWS IS THAT HE IS HUNGRY...TIRED!

SO VERY HUNGRY.

SO VERY, VERY... TIRED.

IT IS AN EXHAUSTED BRUCE BANNER WHO PEERS OUT FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE ALLEYWAY ONTO THE BUSTLING STREETS OF TEL AVIV.

WHERE IN HEAVEN'S NAME HAS THE HULK BROUGHT ME TO *THIS* TIME?!

I REMEMBER HIM WANTING TO GET OUT--AWAY FROM THE STATES--TO SOMEPLACE WHERE HE'D FIND PEACE!

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK THIS IS WHAT MY ALTER-EGO HAD IN MIND!

AT THAT MOMENT, A FAMILIAR CRY RINGS OUT IN THE MARKETPLACE!

STOP, THIEF!

THE WATERMELON IS ALMOST AS BIG AS THE HUNGER OF THE ARAB YOUTH WHO HAS FILCHED IT.

UNFORTUNATELY, HIS FRAIL LIMBS ARE UNEQUAL TO THE TASK OF MAKING OFF WITH HIS ILL-GOTTEN GAINS.

THAT BOY--BEING CHASED BY A MOB!

FOR A SECOND, THE FAMISHED PHYSICIST STARES AT THE STARVING STREET URCHIN.

A SECOND IS ALL IT TAKES FOR THE PERENNIALLY-HUNTED AMERICAN TO IDENTIFY WITH THE YOUNG ARAB--AND TO MAKE HIS DECISION.

THAT WAY! THE KID RAN *THAT* WAY!

THEY FELL FOR IT! OLDEST TRICK IN THE WORLD!

YOU AND YOUR WATERMELON CAN COME OUT OF HIDING NOW, SON--THE PARADE'S GONE BY. OH, I FORGOT--YOU PROBABLY DON'T UNDERSTAND--

I SPEAK *GOOD* ENGLISH! I LEARNED IT FROM AMERICAN TOURISTS LIKE YOU!

SUNNUVA--! WELL, YOU CAN CALL ME BRUCE--

--AND, WHILE WE'RE EATING THAT FORBIDDEN FRUIT, YOU CAN TELL ME WHERE I AM.

SOON...

SO I'M IN ISRAEL -- IN TEL AVIV. WELL, I GUESS IT'S NICE TO KNOW THE NAME OF THE PLACE ONE WAKES UP IN.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SON -- BETWEEN BITES?

I AM SAHAD. YOU ARE A STRANGE AMERICAN, BRUCE.

WHY?

MOST AMERICANS, THEY ARE RICH! THEY CARRY CAMERAS AND BIG POCKETBOOKS THAT SMALL HANDS CAN REACH INTO!

YOU MEAN, YOU'RE A PICKPOCKET, SAHAD?

SOMETIMES, IT IS VERY HARD TO BE AN ARAB IN ISRAEL. BOTH MY PEOPLE AND THE ISRAELIS SAY THAT THIS LAND IS THEIRS. THEY COULD ***SHARE*** IT, BUT TWO VERY OLD BOOKS TELL THEM THEY MUST KILL EACH OTHER OVER IT.

ME, I DON'T READ BOOKS.

I LOOK FOR WORK, AND WHEN THERE IS NO WORK AT THE BIG HOTELS RUNNING ERRANDS FOR THE TOURISTS, I PICK THEIR POCKETS --OR BEG.

〈ALMS, SIR! ALMS FOR THE POOR!〉

〈MY OLD MOTHER HAS NOT EATEN ALL WEEK, SIR!〉

〈LITTLE BEGGAR!〉

〈YES, SIR! THANK YOU, SIR!〉

WHAT DID YOU TELL HIM TO MAKE HIM GIVE YOU MONEY, SAHAD?

OH, ALL ABOUT MY STARVING MOTHER AND FIFTEEN SISTERS!

IS THAT TRUE?

WHO KNOWS? MAYBE! WOULD YOU LIKE MORE TO EAT, BRUCE?

I OWE YOU A FAVOR -- AND I HAVE NEVER TREATED AN AMERICAN BEFORE!

IN THAT CASE, SAHAD -- I ACCEPT!

AS SAHAD HEADS TOWARD A NEARBY CAFE, BRUCE BANNER PONDERS...

SAHAD AND I HAVE SOME THINGS IN COMMON... NO FAMILIES, NO SECURITY.

BUT THAT'S WHERE IT STOPS. NO ONE'S HUNTING HIM. NO ONE HATES HIM. NO ONE'S TRYING TO HURT HIM.

THE LUCKY KID DOESN'T HAVE A CARE IN THE...

BUROOM

SAHAD!

THE EXPLOSION HAS REDUCED THE ISRAELI CAFE TO RUBBLE.

IGNORING THE HALF-NAKED FOREIGNER, THE PERPETRATORS OF THE BOMBING STEP FORWARD TO CLAIM THEIR DUE.

〈IN THE NAME OF ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER THESE LANDS, WE DEAL RETRIBUTION TO THOSE WHO WOULD STEAL FROM US!〉

TERRORISTS!

TH-THEY BOMBED THE CAFE, AND NOW THEY'RE GOING TO FINISH OFF THE SURVIVORS! BUT WHAT OF...

...SAHAD?

〈QUICKLY, BROTHERS! THE ISRAELI MILITARY WILL SOON ARRIVE!〉

〈SLAY ANY WHO YET LIVE!〉

NO! KILLERS! MURDERERS! BUTCHERS! RAARRGHH!

〈MERCIFUL ALLAH, WHO--?!〉

MASKED MEN HAVE KILLED HULK'S FRIEND --NOW *HULK* WILL *KILL* MASKED MEN !!!

*WITNESS A HULK GORED BY GRIEF, WRACKED BY RAGE, FILLED WITH A FURY THAT SURPASSES UNDERSTANDING...*

*FRESH FROM THE DEVASTATION AT THE DOCKS, SABRA SPIES THE HULK RAGING AMIDST THE DEAD AND DYING. HER REACTIONS ARE NOT DICTATED BY LOGIC.*

THE MONSTER --AMIDST THE RUINS OF A CAFE BOMBED BY TERRORISTS!

HE IS IN LEAGUE WITH THE BUTCHERS! NOW LET HIM KNOW THE PARALYZING STING OF SABRA'S *ENERGY QUILLS!*

# ARRGH!

THE MONSTER STANDS! WHILE THE TERRORISTS QUIVER HELPLESSLY-- *THE HULK STILL STANDS!*

FLYING GIRL ATTACKS HULK-- STICKS HULK WITH STINGING NEEDLES ?!

STINGING NEEDLES? MY ENERGY QUILLS ARE THE DEADLIEST ANTIPERSONNEL WEAPON EVER DEVISED BY THE ISRAELI SUPER-AGENT PROGRAM!

I WAS SWORN TO KEEP THE PROGRAM AND MY SUPER-IDENTITY A SECRET SO AS NOT TO FOREWARN OUR ENEMIES!

BUT I AM SURE THAT MY SUPERIORS WILL FORGIVE ME FOR BREAKING MY OATH TO DEAL WITH THIS EMERGENCY!

GIRL SHOOTS NEEDLES AT HULK AGAIN?! NEEDLES STING HULK LIKE BEES!

GO AWAY, GIRL, OR HULK WILL SQUASH YOU!

FWAP!

HUNH?! HULK'S SLAP SOUNDED SO WEAK! WHAT IS ***WRONG*** WITH HULK??

MY ENERGY QUILLS ARE FINALLY AFFECTING HIM!

GOOD! IF THEY CAN WEAKEN HIM, THEN PERHAPS AN ***OVERDOSE*** CAN BRING HIM DOWN!

GRAARH!

WHAT DOES IT TAKE? THE ENERGY QUILLS ARE SENDING ENOUGH OF A JOLT THROUGH THE BRUTE'S NERVOUS SYSTEM TO LAY LOW A REGIMENT!

BUT THE HULK IS STILL COMING!

GIRL TRIES TO HIDE FROM HULK ON TOP OF BUS?

HULK WILL THROW GIRL AND BUS ACROSS CITY!

UNNGH! HULK CAN... BARELY... LIFT... BUS!

THROOM

THE CREATURE COMPLAINS OF WEAKNESS--AND YET OVER TURNS A BUS BARE-HANDED?!

I AM FORTUNATE TO BE ALIVE, HAVING ATTACKED HIM WHILE HE WAS AT THE PEAK OF HIS POWER!

NOW IT IS MERELY A MATTER OF TIME!

ARRGH!

ONCE THE BRUTE'S CELLULAR SYSTEM IS ATTACKED BY THE PARALYTIC QUALITY OF MY ENERGY QUILLS--

--HIS DOWNFALL IS A CERTAINTY!

SABRA IS OVERCONFIDENT. WHEN IT COMES TO THE INCREDIBLE HULK, **NOTHING** IS CERTAIN!

HULK FEELS SO DIZZY...WEAK! WHY IS HULK HERE? WHAT IS HULK FIGHTING FOR?

BOY!

HULK... REMEMBERS? YES! BOY WAS HULK'S FRIEND! BOY ***FED*** HULK!

NOW BOY IS ***DEAD!*** HULK CAME HERE TO GET AWAY FROM DEATH, BUT ALL HULK HAS FOUND IS MORE FIGHTING!

IS WHOLE WORLD CRAZY?!

IS THERE NOWHERE HULK CAN GO TO FIND ***PEACE?!?***

THE HULK'S RAGE FLUSHES THE PARALYTIC AGENT IN THE ENERGY QUILLS FROM HIS SYSTEM!

REVIVED AND RESTORED... AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS POWER... THE HULK RISES UP ANGRY!

ST-STAR OF DAVID--! I THOUGHT HE WAS FINISHED!..

# STRAK

:UNNGHHH!:

THIS TIME THE HULK STRIKES IN EARNEST!

SABRA IS FORTUNATE THAT FATE HAS DELIVERED A SQUADRON OF ISRAELI POLICE TO CUSHION HER LANDING!

(LOOK OUT!)

WHUNNF!

(WHO--?!)

(I AM **SABRA**, OFFICER--MILITARY CODE DESIGNATION SA-1980! YOU CAN CHECK MY CREDENTIALS--)

(--AFTER WE DEAL WITH THE HULK!)

BUT THE GREEN GOLIATH HAS NO INTENTION OF WASTING ANY MORE TIME ON THOSE HE TERMS "PUNY HUMANS!"

HULK IS TAKING BOY AWAY FROM HERE!

DO NOT TRY TO STOP HULK--

--OR YOU WILL BE SORRY!

FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, THEY **BELIEVE** HIM!

BUT STILL, BEING HUMAN, THEY MAKE THE ATTEMPT NO MATTER HOW FUTILE IT MAY APPEAR!

THE MONSTER'S LEAPING AWAY, BEARING THE BODY OF A BOY SLAIN BY THE BOMB BLAST!

THE TERRORISTS WITH WHOM THE CREATURE WAS IN LEAGUE HAVE BEEN ARRESTED! ***THEY*** WILL PAY FOR THEIR CRIME!

BUT IF THIS MONSTER--THIS HULK--THINKS THAT HE CAN UNLEASH HIS SAVAGE STRENGTH UPON THE SOIL OF ISRAEL, AND THEN ESCAPE WITH IMPUNITY...

HE MUST BE TAUGHT THE ***ERROR*** OF HIS WAYS!

HOURS LATER, AFTER A CHASE THAT LEADS HER OVER ISRAEL'S WESTERN DESERT TOWARDS THE NEIGHBORING STATE OF JORDAN, SABRA AT LAST CATCHES UP WITH HER QUARRY...

WHY HAS THE HULK BROUGHT THE BOY'S BODY HERE--TO THIS GODFORSAKEN STRETCH OF DESERT?

AM I ***WRONG*** IN CREDITING THE CREATURE WITH THAT MUCH INTELLIGENCE? HE SEEMS PURE SAVAGERY! PERHAPS THERE ***IS*** NO MOTIVE TO HIS MADNESS?

HULK, I WILL SPEAK TO YOU IN ENGLISH-- HEAR ME! YOU HAVE WREAKED DESTRUCTION BEYOND IMAGINATION SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL IN OUR LAND! AT FIRST I THOUGHT YOU ACTED MINDLESSLY--

--BUT, SINCE YOU ARE IN LEAGUE WITH THOSE ARAB ASSASSINS, I NOW SUSPECT YOUR PRESENCE WAS A CAREFULLY-PLANNED DIVERSION, DEVISED BY THE TERRORISTS TO DRAW OUR MILITARY AWAY FROM THE SCENE OF THEIR CRIME!

I CHARGE YOU WITH ***COMPLICITY*** IN THEIR ACT OF BARBAROUS TERRORISM--AND WITH THE ***MURDER*** OF THAT BOY!

HUNH? YOU SAY ***HULK*** KILLED BOY?!

LIAR!

BOY WAS HULK'S ***FRIEND!*** BOY DIED BECAUSE--BECAUSE...? YES! HULK KNOWS! HULK REMEMBERS! HULK WILL TELL YOU!

BOY DIED BECAUSE BOY'S PEOPLE AND YOURS BOTH WANT TO OWN LAND! BOY DIED BECAUSE YOU WOULDN'T *SHARE!*

BOY DIED BECAUSE OF TWO OLD *BOOKS* THAT SAY HIS PEOPLE AND YOURS MUST *FIGHT* AND *KILL* FOR LAND!

NOW BOY IS DEAD-- *BUT BOY DIDN'T EVEN READ BOOKS!*

ARRGH

HULK CAME LOOKING FOR PEACE--

--BUT THERE IS *NO PEACE* HERE!

FOR AN INSTANT, SABRA PREPARES TO GIVE CHASE. SHE IS, AFTER ALL, AN ISRAELI SUPER-AGENT... A SOLDIER ... A WEAPON OF WAR.

BUT SHE IS ALSO A WOMAN, CAPABLE OF FEELING, CAPABLE OF CARING.

IT HAS TAKEN THE HULK TO MAKE HER SEE THIS DEAD ARAB BOY AS A HUMAN BEING.

IT HAS TAKEN A MONSTER TO AWAKEN HER OWN SENSE OF HUMANITY.



NEXT

THE HULK TRAVELS TO EGYPT TO ENCOUNTER--

# TERROR IN THE CRYPT OF CHAOS!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK

AND INTRODUCING THE ARABIAN KNIGHT!

## CHAOS FROM THE CRYPT!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered *Fury*—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth--

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

WRITTEN WITH FLAIR BY **BILL MANTLO** / DRAWN WITH SAVOIR FAIRE BY **SAL BUSCEMA** / EDITED WITH NO TIME TO SPARE BY **ALLEN MILGROM** / SUPERVISED FROM 6'7" IN THE AIR BY **JIM SHOOTER**

## CRYPT OF CHAOS!

ALTHOUGH THE GREEN-SKINNED GOLIATH KNOWN AS THE INCREDIBLE HULK IS THE MIGHTIEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH, HIS SENSE OF DIRECTION IS ABYSMAL. FOR DAYS HE HAS WANDERED ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST, GROWING INCREASINGLY MORE LOST...

...UNTIL, AT LAST, TIRED, HUNGRY, AND CONFUSED, HE LAY DOWN TO REST ON THE SHIFTING DESERT SANDS.

NIGHT EBBED, THE COOL OF THE EVENING GIVING WAY TO THE FIERCE HEAT OF DAY AND UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE HULK--

--SLEEP TRANSFORMED HIM BACK TO HIS HATED AND HELPLESS ALTER-EGO... **BRUCE BANNER!**

JIM NOVAK, LETTERER
BOB SHAREN, COLORIST

WHEREAS THE HULK CAN GO FOR DAYS ON END WITHOUT FOOD OR DRINK, SUCH ABSTINENCE TAKES ITS TOLL ON HIS MORE HUMAN HALF.

WRACKED BY HUNGER, DEHYDRATION, AND EXPOSURE TO THE ELEMENTS, BRUCE BANNER DELIRIOUSLY REASONS--FROM THE INTENSITY OF HIS SUFFERING--THAT HE IS STILL ALIVE.

HE DOES NOT REALLY KNOW WHETHER HIS DEDUCTION IS ACCURATE.

ROUGH HANDS ROBE HIM, LIFT HIM, AND LAY HIM ACROSS THE BROAD BACK OF SOME MALODOROUS ANIMAL.

IT IS THE STENCH, AND THE FORWARD LURCHING, LOPING MOTION THAT CONVINCES DR. BANNER THAT HE *IS* STILL ALIVE.

HEAVEN COULD NEITHER SMELL SO BAD NOR BE SO UNCOMFORTABLE. HELL WOULD CERTAINLY BE... WORSE?

IT IS SETTLED THEN, BRUCE BANNER THINKS. I AM ALIVE. I HAVE BEEN SAVED. AND I AM NOW BEING TRANSPORTED TO..OBLIVION::

DAYS LATER...

YES... I'D LIKE MORE WATER... THANK YOU.

OH, I FORGOT AGAIN, DIDN'T I? YOU DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH -- I'VE GOT TO NOD MY HEAD.

HE DOES SO, AND THE MOSLEM MAIDEN IN THE ALL-ENVELOPING CHADOR POURS HIM ANOTHER CUP.

FROM BEHIND HER VEIL, SILVERY PEALS OF LAUGHTER ANNOUNCE HER AMUSEMENT AT THE WAY HER SUN-BURNED PATIENT RESPONDS TO HER GENTLE MINISTRATIONS.

SO, EFFENDI -- I SEE YOU ARE RECOVERED.

ABDUL! YES, QUITE -- THANKS TO THE TENDER NURSING OF YOUR WIFE MAYA HERE. HOW LONG...

YOU HAVE RESTED IN OUR TENTS FOR FIVE DAYS SINCE WE FOUND YOU CLOSE TO DEATH OUT ON THE GREAT EASTERN DESERT.

SPEAKING YOUR LANGUAGE, I HAVE COME TO YOU EVERY DAY, TELLING YOU WHO WE ARE... AND TRYING TO UNDERSTAND YOU.

YOU HAVE A STRONG HOLD OVER YOUR WILL, DR. BANNER. EVEN IN THE THROES OF DELIRIUM, YOU SPOKE LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOURSELF THAN YOUR NAME... AND YOUR FEAR OF SOME MONSTER.

MY BEDOUINS HOLD TO AN OLD PROVERB THAT ADMONISHES THEM TO HEED THE WORDS OF ONE WHO HAS BEEN TOUCHED BY THE SUN.

WE ARE ALSO, DESPITE THESE SUSPICIOUS TIMES, AN HOSPITABLE PEOPLE -- AND SO WE HAVE SPOKEN NOTHING OF YOU TO THE AUTHORITIES IN CAIRO.

THEN I'M IN *EGYPT!*

DID I NOT SAY SO, EFFENDI? FORGIVE ME. YES, YOU ARE IN EGYPT, NATION OF THE NILE, CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION, ANCIENT BIRTHPLACE OF KINGS...

...AND DEMONS!

IT IS HIS FIRST FORAY OUTSIDE THE TENT SINCE HIS RESCUE FROM THE DESERT, AND BRUCE BANNER IS NOT PREPARED FOR THE ASTOUNDING SPECTACLE THAT GREETS HIS EYES. THE CLIFFS REAR THEIR ANCIENT PEAKS HIGH ABOVE THE DESERT SANDS.

BUT THEY ARE LESS REMARKABLE THAN THE SINISTER STATUES STANDING OUT IN SHARP RELIEF FROM THE VERY CLIFF FACE -- SILENT SENTINELS DWARFING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENCAMPMENT NESTLED IN THE SHADOWS AT THEIR FEET.

BEHOLD THE DISCOVERY OF THE CENTURY EFFENDI! THE TIMELOST TOMB OF... GOG AND MAGOG!

THE ARAB CHIEFTAIN MERELY MOUTHS THE ANCIENT NAMES, AND BRUCE BANNER TREMBLES WITH AN ANCESTRAL MEMORY OF AN EVIL AS OLD AS CREATION ITSELF!

IT IS A FAR CRY FROM THE EGYPTIAN SANDS TO THE NEW MEXICO DESERT, BUT THE ACTIVITY AROUND THE ONCE-PROUD INSTALLATION CALLED GAMMA BASE IS JUST AS INTEGRAL TO OUR STORY.

LET'S GET THESE TRANSPORTS LOADED! ON THE DOUBLE THERE, SOLDIER!

GAMMA BASE

HRMPH! IT TOOK YEARS TO BUILD GAMMA BASE, AND HE ACTS LIKE HE EXPECTS US TO DISMANTLE IT IN A COUPLE OF HOURS!

NATCH! HE'S FROM WASHINGTON! THOSE PENTAGON BUTTON-PUSHERS THINK ALL WE DO IS PLAY GAMES HERE!

TOO BAD THE COLONEL COULDN'T CONVINCE THEM THAT WE'RE *NEEDED* TO CAPTURE THE *HULK!*

ON EVERY LEVEL, THE MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO GAMMA BASE EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THEIR OUSTED COMMANDANT...AND CONTEMPT FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE WHICH HAS DEFUNDED THEIR COMMAND.

LT. PERRIWINKLE, YOUR LOYALTY TO COL. TALBOT IS COMMENDABLE--

-- BUT I MUST REMIND YOU THAT YOU ARE SPEAKING TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.

HMMPH!

TURNING ON HER HEEL, LT. PERRIWINKLE LEADS CONGRESSWOMAN RUTH MESSINGER AND THE REST OF HER COMMITTEE TO THE OFFICES OF THE BASE COMMANDER.

HERE COMES THE "WILL OF THE PEOPLE", CAPT. BOWMAN.

ARMED WITH A GUILLOTINE CALLED AN "ACT OF CONGRESS", DR. MAXWELL. BLASTED CIVILIANS!

I SEE THAT THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN STAFF OF GAMMA BASE ARE OF ONE ACCORD IN BLAMING EVERYONE EXCEPT THEMSELVES --

--FOR THEIR FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THEIR MISSION... THE CAPTURE AND/OR CURE OF THE *HULK!*

YOU'D NEVER HAVE DARED TO DO THIS IN MY DAY, CONGRESSWOMAN!

I'D HAVE FOUGHT YOU! I'D HAVE GONE TO THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF WITH TALES OF THE HAVOC THE HULK HAS WREAKED ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

I DON'T DOUBT YOU WOULD HAVE, GENERAL ROSS. IT'S A PITY YOU WEREN'T AS SUCCESSFUL AT CATCHING THE HULK--

--AS YOU WERE AT CONVINCING PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS TO CONTINUE FUNDING YOUR LITTLE WAR GAMES.

YOU'VE SERVED YOUR COUNTRY LONG AND WELL, GENERAL -- BUT I THINK IT'S TIME YOU ACCEPTED YOUR RETIREMENT.

BESIDES, AREN'T YOU IN THE CARE OF A *DOCTOR?*

A PSYCHIATRIST, YOU MEAN, CONGRESSWOMAN. YES, I'M OLD, TIRED... BUT NOT *BEATEN!*

I'VE SEEN THE HORROR OF THE HULK FIRSTHAND!

MAYBE SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED IT, YOU'LL *BEG* ME TO COME BACK!

SUDDENLY GAMMA BASE SEEMS TO HEAVE AND QUAKE AS SOME SUBTERRANEAN DISTURBANCE ROCKS IT TO ITS FOUNDATIONS!

DOC SAMSON! WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME--?!

IT FEELS LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE-- BUT THIS DESERT IS GEOLOGICALLY STABLE!

LOOK TO THE WINDOW!

THE OCCUPANTS OF THE BASE COMMANDER'S OFFICE DO NOT NEED CONGRESS WOMAN MESSINGER TO TELL THEM WHERE TO LOOK FOR THE SOURCE OF THE NIGHTMARISH DISTURBANCE... THE EERIE LIGHT STREAMING IN THROUGH THE WINDOW IS ENOUGH.

I--I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHERE IS **COLONEL TALBOT?** I DEMAND TO KNOW?

YOU WANT THE COLONEL, CONGRESSWOMAN? JUST TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE!

# VVVRRRRCARRRR

WITH A GLEAM OF GOLD, THE GARGANTUAN BATTLE-CRUISER RISES SLOWLY, MAJESTICALLY FROM ITS SUBTERRANEAN SILO.

BEHOLD... THE WAR-WAGON!

BUILT IN THE UTMOST SECRECY, IT WAS THE **REAL** REASON GAMMA BASE COULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR ITS SPENDING TO CONGRESS.

YET, TODAY, IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN UNVEILED AS THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO THE MENACE OF **THE INCREDIBLE HULK!**

AND, SHOULD IT FAIL IN ITS MISSION, ONLY ONE LIFE WOULD BE FORFEIT -- FOR THE **WAR-WAGON** IS SOLELY UNDER THE CONTROL OF HE WHO CONCEIVED ITS CREATION... **COLONEL GLENN TALBOT!**

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T BE ON HAND TO WELCOME YOU AND YOUR COMMITTEE, CONGRESSWOMAN MESSINGER--

-- BUT, AS YOU CAN SEE, I'VE GOT MY HANDS **FULL** AT THE MOMENT!

COL. TALBOT, YOU HAVE BEEN DIVESTED OF YOUR COMMAND! I DEMAND THAT YOU RETURN TO GAMMA BASE AT ONCE!

YOUR ACTION SMACKS OF -- OF **INSURRECTION!**

THAT'S WHAT ENGLAND ACCUSED THE AMERICAN **CONGRESS** OF ONCE... IN 1776!

BUT CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE PERSISTED AND REBELLED -- KNOWING THAT THEIR COURSE OF ACTION WAS CORRECT! THE HULK IS A MENACE TO THE ENTIRE WORLD, CONGRESS-WOMAN --

--AND I WILL NOT REST UNTIL HE IS DESTROYED!

RISING ON A COLUMN OF FIRE, THE WAR-WAGON DISAPPEARS FROM SIGHT!

INSTANTLY, TURMOIL REIGNS THROUGHOUT GAMMA BASE...

SOLDIER! GET A RADAR FIX ON THE WAR-WAGON! DISPATCH PURSUIT PLANES AFTER COL. TALBOT!

H-HOW, SIR? WE WERE IN THE PROCESS OF DISMANTLING THE BASE, REMEMBER?

ANYTHING WE COULD USE TO GO AFTER THE COLONEL IS ALREADY IN *MOTHBALLS!*

DOC SAMSON GROANS, BUT THERE IS ONE PERSON PRESENT ON GAMMA BASE WHO WELCOMES THE NEWS...

I TRAINED YOU ***WELL***, GLENN. DO YOUR DUTY AS YOU SEE IT -- FIND AND FIGHT THE FOE YOU MUST.

THE PRAYERS OF THIS OLD SOLDIER GO WITH YOU.

IN EGYPT'S GREAT EASTERN DESERT, THE MUCH-RECOVERED DR. BRUCE BANNER IS INTRODUCED TO THE HEAD OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION...

I'M PLEASED TO MEET YOU, SIR. THE WHOLE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IS AWARE OF THE DISCOVERIES OF ***DR. HASSAN KAREEM.***

AFTER THIS FIND, THE WHOLE ***WORLD*** WILL KNOW OF HIM!

AH, ABDUL -- AND YOUR AMERICAN FOUNDLING.

YOU ARE A MAN OF SCIENCE YOURSELF, DR. BANNER?

I... WAS. I'VE BEEN A... TRAVELER... FOR SOME YEARS NOW.

I, TOO, HAVE VOYAGED A GREAT DEAL -- INTO THE ***PAST!*** IT WAS IN ANCIENT PAPYRI, CONSIDERED UNTRANSLATABLE --

-- THAT I DISCOVERED THE HISTORICAL BASIS FOR THE BIBLICAL MYTH OF THOSE TWIN MYTHOLOGICAL DEMONS... ***GOG*** AND ***MAGOG!***

HIS EYES BLAZING WITH THE FERVOR OF HIS DISCOVERY, DR. HASSAN KAREEM EXPLAINS...

"YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH YOUR HOLY BIBLE-- THE OLD TESTAMENT-- WHERE IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS IT IS TOLD HOW MOSES LED THE ISRAELITES OUT OF EGYPT BY PARTING THE RED SEA--

"--AND HOW THE WATERS POURED BACK AGAIN, DROWNING PHAROAH AND ALL HIS CAVALRY?

"WATCHING FROM AFAR WAS ONE NEPHUT-SHA, AN EGYPTIAN WIZARD OF NO SMALL REPUTE. HE CURSED MOSES AND THE GOD OF THE ISRAELITES...

"...AND REPAIRED TO HIS BLACK TEMPLE WHERE, OFFERING SACRIFICE UPON SACRIFICE TO THE ANCIENT AND TERRIBLE GODS OF EGYPT, HE IMPLORED THEM TO GRANT HIM THE POWER TO AVENGE HIS NATION'S HONOR."

HISTORY HAS A WAY OF REPEATING ITSELF, DR. BANNER. YOU SEE, THEN -- AS NOW -- EGYPTIAN AND JEW WERE MORTAL ENEMIES.

BUT EGYPT IS AT PEACE WITH ISRAEL NOW, DR. KAREEM.

ARE WE, ABDUL?

BEFORE THE ARAB CHIEFTAN CAN PONDER THE AGED ARCHAEOLOGIST'S QUERY, DR. KAREEM PROCEEDS WITH HIS TALE.

"IN DUE TIME, THE BLOOD OF HIS VICTIMS CARRIED NEPHUT-SHA'S PRAYERS HEAVENWARD, TO THE EARS OF THE GREAT GOD SETH.

GREAT LORD OF DARKNESS, OF DEATH, OF THE DESERT ETERNAL--

--GRANT ME THE POWER TO SMITE THY ENEMIES!

"THEN, ACCORDING TO HIEROGLYPHICS THAT THEMSELVES REEKED OF UNSPEAKABLE ACTS AND ABYSMAL EVIL, SETH GRANTED NEPHUT-SHA'S REQUEST.

"HE REMADE THE WIZARD INTO TWO BESTIAL, CARRION CREATURES...THE DEMONS **GOG** AND **MAGOG!**

"IT IS WRITTEN THAT NOT EVEN NEPHUT-SHA'S FOLLOWERS -- THE DARK-ROBED PRIESTS SERVING THE EBONY SHRINE OF SETH -- KNEW FOR WHAT REASON THEIR MASTER PETITIONED THE DEATH-GOD... UNTIL NEPHUT-SHA STOOD BEFORE THEM TRANSFORMED.

WHERE IS NEPHUT-SHA? HE MUST KNOW THAT THE TEMPLE IS UNDER ATTACK!

SHADOWS OF SETH! WHAT DEMONS BE THESE?!

I AM... GOG!

AND I... MAGOG!

WE ARE TWO WHO HAD BEEN ONE! NOW SPEAK, DUNG-DOG -- WHO DARES ASSAULT OUR SANCTUARY?

'TIS PHAROAH HIMSELF!

LYING PIG! PHAROAH IS DEAD -- SLAIN BY THE GOD OF THE ISRAELITES!

'TIS HIS SUCCESSOR THEN, DEMON-BROTHER -- COME TO WAR UPON US WITH ALL THE ARMIES OF EGYPT!

ONWARD, SOLDIERS OF PHAROAH!

ASSAIL YON TEMPLE OF SIN AND DRAG FORTH ITS DEMON-SPAWN!

AS PHAROAH COMMANDS -- SO SHALL IT BE!

"THE SCROLLS REVEAL, INDEED, THAT AS PHAROAH COMMANDED -- SO DID IT COME TO PASS.

SO! MY SPIES WERE CORRECT! THERE IS DARK EVIL AT WORK HERE!

NOT DIRECTED AT YOU, GREAT PHAROAH -- BUT AT THE ACCURSED ISRAELITES!

SILENCE, DEMON-SPAWN! HAVE WE NOT SUFFERED *ENOUGH* BEFORE THE WRATH OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL? WOULD YOU BRING HIS ANGER DOWN UPON EGYPT AGAIN?

MOSES AND HIS PEOPLE ARE GONE! I, FOR ONE, WILL WAGE NO MORE WAR AGAINST THEM!

AS FOR YOU WHO WERE MIGHTY ENOUGH TO DEFY MY ARMY BEFORE YOUR CAPTURE, HEAR NOW MY CURSE...

THE PHAROAH'S CURSE, DR. KAREEM -- WHAT IS IT?

THAT, BECAUSE THEY HAD THREATENED THE PEACE THE FEARFUL PHAROAH SO EAGERLY CRAVED, THEY WERE TO BE TAKEN TO THIS UNHALLOWED SPOT--

--AND BE ENTOMBED ALIVE... FOREVER!

YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE HIDDEN WRITINGS OF THE BANNED SETH CULT LED ME TO SUSPECT THE TOMB MIGHT ACTUALLY EXIST.

MORE YEARS OF FRUITLESS EXCAVATION DID NOT DISSUADE ME.

AND NOW, AFTER A LIFETIME, I HAVE AT LAST UNCOVERED THE TRUTH--THAT THE DARK SORCERY OF ANCIENT EGYPT *DID* GIVE BIRTH TO AVENGING DEMONS!

HERE THEY LIE--ENTOMBED FOR ALL ETERNITY AT THE COMMAND OF A SPINELESS PHAROAH WHO FEARED TO UNLEASH THEIR FURY AGAINST THE ISRAELITES!

AND COULD THEIR POWER BUT BE REAWAKENED, THE ENEMIES OF EGYPT WOULD ONCE AGAIN TREMBLE AT THE SOUL-NUMBING TREAD...

...OF GÖG AND MAGOG!

ALLAH BE MERCIFUL!

WHAT IS HE RAVING ABOUT, ABDUL? WHAT DOES HE MEAN... *REAWAKENED?!*

AS IF IN ANSWER TO BRUCE BANNER'S QUESTION, THE CAVERN CONTAINING THE ANCIENT CRYPT BEGINS TO WRITHE LIKE AN ANGRY SERPENT!

WHA--?!

EARTHQUAKE, EFFENDI! WE MUST FLEE!

BUT PROFESSOR KAREEM--?

THROUGH THE SWIRLING DUST OF AGES, BRUCE BANNER HEARS A HOARY CHANT... AND SEES A SIGHT NOT MEANT FOR MORTAL EYES!

THE TERRIFYING VISION REMAINS EVEN AS BRUCE BANNER IS BURIED UNDER THE CASCADING DEBRIS OF THE TEMPLE.

THE AMERICAN AND PROF. KAREEM HAVE BEEN CRUSHED --AND I AM BEING DRIVEN FURTHER BACK INTO THE TOMB!

I MUST SEEK SHELTER!

THIS CHAMBER-- IT APPEARS TO WEATHER THE EARTHQUAKE MORE SOLIDLY THAN THE REST OF THE CRYPT! PERHAPS I SHALL BE *SAFE* HERE UNTIL THE WORKERS DIG ME OUT!

EH? THAT GLOWING SCIMITAR LYING ACROSS AN ORNATE RUG--!

IT SEEMS OF A DIFFERENT AGE ALTOGETHER FROM THE CRYPT! CAN THIS BE THE SACRED SCIMITAR OF WHICH OUR LEGENDS SPEAK?

IT IS! THE INSCRIPTION ON THE HILT IS 13TH CENTURY ARAMAIC!

IT SPEAKS OF AN EVIL THAT EMERGED FROM THIS TOMB THEN --ONLY TO BE DRIVEN BACK BY THE WIELDER OF THIS SWORD!

PROF. KAREEM SPOKE OF HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF! WHAT IF HE WERE MORE RIGHT THAN HE KNEW?!

EDUCATED IN EUROPE'S GREATEST UNIVERSITIES BEFORE RETURNING TO LEAD HIS WANDERING TRIBESPEOPLE, THE YOUNG ARAB CHIEFTAIN LOOKS WITH SOME SKEPTICISM UPON ANCIENT LEGENDS EVEN AS HE HEFTS THE SHIMMERING SCIMITAR IN HIS HAND.

MEANWHILE, AT THE MOUTH OF THE TOMB...

<DIG! IF WE MAKE HASTE-- WE MAY STILL FIND OUR CHIEFTAIN ALIVE!>*

*TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC, OF COURSE-- AL.

BUT NO SOONER DO THE LOYAL BEDOUINS PLACE PICK TO STONE, THAN THEY FIND FAR MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR!

AIIEEE!

<AN EXPLOSION --FROM *WITHIN* THE TOMB!>

THEN, ADVANCING THROUGH THE MYSTICALLY BLASTED DUST AND DEBRIS...

WE RISE! WE WALK! WE BREATHE THE PURE EGYPTIAN AIR!

AFTER UNTOLD CENTURIES OF IMPRISONMENT... ***GOG AND MAGOG*** *LIVE AGAIN!*

PARALYZED WITH FRIGHT, THE BEDOUIN WORKMEN NONETHELESS FINDS WORD TO DESCRIBE THEIR TERROR...

<SOULS OF OUR ANCESTORS --THE TOMB HAS SWALLOWED OUR CHIEFTAIN, PROF. KAREEM AND THE AMERICAN...>

<...AND DISGORGED A TRIO OF DEMONS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE!>

THOUGH UTTERED IN A LANGUAGE CHANGED BY THE CENTURIES, THE WORKER'S WORDS ARE NEVERTHELESS UNDERSTOOD BY THE DEMONS...

TRIO? WHAT MEAN THE SLAVES, GOG? THERE ARE BUT TWO OF US?

LOOK TO YOUR BACK, MAGOG! OUR CRYPT EVEN NOW UNLEASHES A *THIRD* HORROR!

--AS *TERRIBLE* AS WE TWO!

THE JADE JUGGERNAUT EMERGES FROM THE SEETHING SHADOWS OF THE TOMB ANGRY AND CONFUSED. ANGRY, BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS OR WHY HE FOUND HIMSELF FORCED TO SMASH THROUGH TONS OF STONE TO REACH THE LIGHT --

-- CONFUSED BECAUSE HE CANNOT SHAKE THE MEMORY OF THE STRANGE AND TERRIFYING TRANSFORMATION OF A BESPECTACLED EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGIST INTO THESE TWO HISSING HORRORS BEFORE HIM!

IT IS AS IF IT HAD BEEN WITNESSED BY SOMEONE ELSE -- AND THE INCREDIBLE HULK HAS ENOUGH TROUBLES WITH HIS OWN MEMORIES WITHOUT HAVING TO MAKE SENSE OF ANOTHER'S.

WHO ARE UGLY HORN-HEADS TO CALL HULK TERRIBLE?!

HIS TONGUE IS NOT THE TONGUE OF PHAROAH, GOG -- NOR IS IT THE SAME AS THAT SPOKEN BY THE SLAVES WHO UNEARTHED US!

NO -- YET WE UNDERSTAND IT!

WE ARE NO LONGER NEPHUT-SHA, WIZARD -- BUT PROFESSOR HASSAN KAREEM, SCHOLAR!

IT MATTERS NOT! BOTH MORTALS SHARED THE SAME GOALS -- DEATH AND DESTRUCTION TO THE ISRAELITES!

AND YOU, CREATURE, CANNOT STOP US FROM FULFILLING OUR SACRED TASK!

BAH! HORN-HEADS ARE NOT MEN -- BUT THEY *TALK* JUST AS MUCH! TALKING MAKES HULK'S HEAD BUZZ!

THEN WE WILL CEASE OUR ONE-SIDED DIALOGUE, CREATURE -- AND MAKE YOU *BLEED* INSTEAD!

DIE, MONSTER!

AT THAT MOMENT, EMERGING FROM WITHIN THE TOMB...

LIVING DEMONS -- LIKE THOSE CARVED ON THE CRYPT WALLS -- BESETTING A THIRD!

HOLD, SETH SPAWN! RELEASE THE GREEN-SKINNED GOLIATH!

IN TIME PAST YOU DID RISE FROM YOUR REST, DEMONS, TO UNLEASH THE DOGS OF WAR ON THE ANCIENT SANDS OF EGYPT! THEN MY ANCESTOR -- A DESERT NOMAD -- WAS CHOSEN BY THE MAGICIANS OF THE EAST TO GUARD AGAINST YOU!

AFTER A LEGENDARY STRUGGLE THAT FIRST CHAMPION SUCCEEDED IN REINTERRING YOU BOTH -- BUT ONLY BY SEALING HIMSELF FOR ALL ETERNITY INSIDE THE TOMB AS WELL!

HIS SPIRIT LIVES ON -- IN ME! THIS TIME I AM THE MYSTIC GUARDIAN! TURN DEMONS! TURN AND FACE -- THE ARABIAN KNIGHT!

AARGH! YES! WE REMEMBER EMERGING INTO THE LIGHT ONLY TO BE ENTOMBED AGAIN!

THIS TIME IT IS WE WHO SHALL PREVAIL! THIS TIME WE WILL STAY FREE!

# RAVAGE

HULK IS SICK OF WORDS!

THE HULK?

WHAT A FOOL I WAS! NOW I KNOW WHAT BECAME OF THE AMERICAN -- DR. BANNER!

MAY IT BE THE WILL OF ALLAH THAT THE MONSTER AIDS ME IN RETURNING THE DEMONS TO THEIR CRYPT!

HORN-HEADS ATTACKED HULK! NOW IT IS HULK'S TURN!

THE GUARDIAN AND THE GOLIATH HAVE ALLIED THEMSELVES AGAINST US, MAGOG!

AS THEY FIGHT TOGETHER, LET THEM DIE TOGETHER--

--FOR WE WILL NEVER AGAIN BE RETURNED TO THE SUFFOCATING SILENCE OF OUR SARCOPHAGI!

THE BATTLE IS JOINED...

...ON BOTH FRONTS!

WHILE MAGOG RENDS AT THE HULK WITH FANG AND CLAW, GOG RISES UP TO ASSAIL ME WITH A BOULDER AS BIG AS TWO MEN!

BUT THE SACRED SCIMITAR CAN EASILY *HALVE* THE PERIL--

--THAT IT MAY PASS HARMLESSLY BY ON EITHER SIDE OF MY MAGIC CARPET!

*ARRHH!* YOU ARE A COWARD, GUARDIAN OF THE CRYPT!

COME DOWN! FACE ME HERE, WITHIN REACH OF MY TERRIBLE TALONS, AND WE WILL TEST TO SEE WHAT STUFF YOUR POWER BE MADE OF!

THAT YOU ALREADY KNOW WELL, DEMON--

--FOR IT RETURNED YOU TO IMPRISONMENT WITHIN YOUR TOMB THE LAST TIME FATE SET YOU FREE!

MEANWHILE, CARING NOTHING FOR ANCIENT CURSES OR CRYPTS, THE HULK FIGHTS SIMPLY BECAUSE HE WAS ATTACKED!

WHAT MANNER OF MORTAL ARE YOU, THAT YOU WITHSTAND THE DEMONIC MIGHT OF MAGOG?!

HULK IS HULK, HORN-HEAD!

YOU ARE STRONG--BUT HULK IS THE STRONGEST THERE IS!

NOW GET OFF HULK'S FACE!!

KRAKOOM!

HUNH! HORN-HEAD HAS FINALLY DONE WHAT HULK WANTED!

HORN-HEAD HAS *SHUT UP!*

WITH A SNARL OF CONTEMPT, THE MIGHTY JADE GIANT HURLS THE MALEVOLENT MAGOG BACK INTO THE CRYPT WHENCE HE CAME!

EXCELLENT, MY EMERALD ALLY! YOU MAKE ME GLADDER THAN EVER THAT I SAVED YOU FROM DYING IN THE DESERT, DR. BANNER!

SWORD-MAN SAVED PUNY BANNER?

HULK HATES BANNER!!!

RROP!

U-UNGHH!

I--I SEE I HAVE MADE AN ERROR IN JUDGEMENT REGARDING HE WHOM I ASSUMED WAS MY ALLY!

IN SOME WAY I CANNOT FATHOM, HIS IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSONALITY FROM DR. BANNER'S.

HE FOUGHT THE DEMONS NOT TO HELP ME--BUT BECAUSE THEY ATTACKED HIM!

THE WAYS OF ALLAH ARE INSCRUTABLE--STILL, THE JADE ONE HAS DEFEATED MAGOG!

AND EVEN NOW GOG FLEES FROM HIM BACK INTO THE TOMB!

I MUST BE THANKFUL FOR THE HULK'S ASSISTANCE WHETHER GIVEN WILLINGLY OR NO--

--BUT I MUST ALSO PUT HIM FROM MY THOUGHTS AS I STRIVE TO SEAL THE DEMONS IN THEIR ACCURSED CRYPT!

HOWEVER, THE ARABIAN KNIGHT CANNOT IGNORE THE HULK'S PRESENCE ANY MORE THAN THE HULK CAN DISMISS THE KNIGHT'S...

...AND SO WARY ARE THEY OF EACH OTHER, THAT THEY LEAVE THEMSELVES OPEN TO A SURPRISE ATTACK FROM ABOVE!

GRAARGH! HERE--IN THE CRYPT THAT HAS IMPRISONED US FOR CENTURIES--SHALL YOU MEET DEATH, MONSTER!

GOG AND MAGOG--SPRING FROM HIDING AMIDST THE SHADOWS!

MUST USE MAGIC CARPET TO DODGE!

NOW YOU SHALL BE ENTOMBED, GUARDIAN--TO SLEEP THE SLEEP OF THE AGES! AARH! MISSED!

SO THAT IS YOUR SCHEME, DEMON-DOG--TO BIND ME...

...THAT YOU MAY WANDER FREE OUT ONTO THE EARTH UNOPPOSED--WARRING ON A NATION WITH WHOM WE ARE AT PEACE? NEVER! BACK, BACK, I SAY!

LET THE SEARING ENERGY OF THE SACRED SCIMITAR DRIVE YOU BACK WHENCE YOU CAME!

NO! NOT BACK INTO MY SARCOPHAGUS!

AYE, GOG! IT TOOK THE OPENING OF YOUR COFFIN BY PROF. KAREEM TO BREATHE LIFE BACK INTO YOUR FIENDISH FLESH!

WITH ALLAH'S HELP, MAY THE CLOSING OF THE COFFIN DEPRIVE YOU ONCE AGAIN OF DEMONIC LIFE!

NOOOOO!

WITH A SNAP OF HIDDEN, AGE-OLD LOCKS, GOG'S SARCOPHAGUS SLAMS SHUT, ENTRAPPING THE DIABOLICAL DEMON. FROM WITHIN COME NO SOUNDS OF STRUGGLE ...MERELY SILENCE!

ONLY MAGOG REMAINS TO CARRY ON THE EVIL BEGUN CENTURIES BEFORE BY SETH'S WICKED WIZARD, NEPHUT-SHA!

GOG HAS FALLEN! BUT HE MAY STILL BE FREED -- ONCE I HAVE DONE WITH YOU!

IT IS HULK WHO WILL END THIS FIGHT, HORN-HEAD!

HULK... AND *ONLY* HULK!

ARRGHH! DESPITE MY *OWN* POWER, YOU CAST ME ASIDE -- YOUR POWER IS VAST!

HORN-HEAD SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HULK!

HULK *TOLD* HORN-HEAD THAT HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

WELL DO I BELIEVE IT! THE HULK'S MIGHT RIVALS THAT OF ALL THE REST OF US COMBINED!

BUT THE HULK SEEKS ONLY TO CRUSH THE DEMON MAGOG -- NOT TO CONTAIN HIM!

THE HULK IS TOO UNPREDICTABLE! HE CANNOT BE TRUSTED TO END THE PLAGUE OF GOG AND MAGOG FOR ALL TIME!

TO ENSURE THAT END, THE TOMB MUST BE SEALED -- WHETHER THE HULK REMAINS WITHIN IT... OR NOT!

A SPARK FROM THE ARABIAN KNIGHT'S SCIMITAR IGNITES A CRATE OF DYNAMITE USED IN THE EARLY STAGES OF EXCAVATING THE TOMB.

THE RESULTANT BLAST ROCKS THE SURROUNDING DESERT--AND BRINGS TONS OF STONE DOWN UPON THE ANCIENT TOMB!

I AM SORRY, HULK!

IT WAS ALLAH'S WILL THAT YOU BE BROUGHT INTO THIS AFFAIR, TO AID ME IN DOING MY DUTY AS CHOSEN GUARDIAN OF THE CRYPT.

I AM SORRY THAT ALLAH ALSO CHOSE FIT TO REWARD YOU... WITH DEATH.

BUT I SENSED--IN THE BRIEF TIME I KNEW YOU--THAT YOUR EXISTENCE WAS A TORTURED ONE.

I PRAY NOW--THAT YOU HAVE HELPED ENSURE THE PEACE OF EGYPT--THAT **YOU** AT LAST KNOW PEACE, AS WELL.

THE KNIGHT LEAVES.

THE SANDSTONE STIRS.

YET THERE ARE NO EYES PRESENT TO SEE THAT THE ARABIAN KNIGHT'S EPITAPH TO THE EMERALD GOLIATH HAS BEEN, AT THE VERY LEAST, PREMATURE.

HUNH! BLAST SLAMMED COFFIN DOOR ON HORN-HEAD--THEN ROOF FELL IN ON HULK'S HEAD!

WHERE IS FLYING SWORD-MAN? GONE! GOOD--HULK DOES NOT WANT TO SMASH ANYMORE! HULK JUST WANTS TO BE ALONE!

HULK REMEMBERS NOW! THAT IS WHY HULK CAME TO THIS PLACE! TO FIND PEACE!

BUT HULK HAS NOT FOUND PEACE HERE... OR ANYWHERE!

SO HULK WILL HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE!

LEG MUSCLES MIGHTIER THAN MERE MORTAL MAN CAN EVER CONCEIVE OF PROPEL THE GREEN GOLIATH HEAVEN-WARD... TOWARDS WHAT NEW DANGERS, NONE CAN SAY!

A WORLD AWAY, ON NEW YORK CITY'S FABULOUS FIFTH AVENUE...

HERE YA ARE, BUDDY-- AVENGERS MANSION!

THANKS, DRIVER. KEEP THE CHANGE.

NOT ON YER LIFE! YER RICK JONES, AIN'TCHA? I USED TA BE IN YER TEEN BRIGADE-- CANARSIE CHAPTER! THE RIDE'S ON ME!

I DIDN'T THINK ANYONE REMEMBERED, THANKS.

GUITAR SLUNG ACROSS HIS BACK, THIS SIDEKICK OF SUPER-HEROES-- NOW TURNED SONGWRITER--FACES A DIFFICULT FUTURE...

WHY DID I COME BACK HERE?

THAT'S EASY. I CAME BACK HERE BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE I FIRST BETRAYED A FRIEND... AND MYSELF.

HOW MANY YEARS AGO WAS IT...

...THAT, IN SAVING AN IDIOT TEENAGER FROM A GAMMA BOMB, DR. BRUCE BANNER ABSORBED SUCH AN INTENSE DOSE OF GAMMA RADIATION THAT HE TURNED INTO THE MAN-MONSTER MEN CALL-- THE HULK!

I OWED HIM MY LIFE--SWORE I'D NEVER LEAVE HIM!

BUT I DID, AFTER HE LEFT THE AVENGERS AND BECAME MORE SAVAGE THAN EVER!

THAT WAS MY EXCUSE, WASN'T IT?

IDENTIFICATION REQUESTED...

AVENGERS A-1 PRIORITY RICK JONES

HIS CARD SCANNED BY A MICROELECTRIC EYE INVENTED BY MILLIONAIRE TONY STARK -- WHOSE TOWNHOUSE SERVES AS HEADQUARTERS FOR THE MIGHTY AVENGERS, AND WHO IS HIMSELF THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN -- RICK STANDS BACK AS THE DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL...

JARVIS!

SO VERY GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MASTER RICK. CAN I BE OF SERVICE?

'FRAID NOT. I'VE GOTTA SEE THE AVENGERS.

MIGHT I BE SO BOLD AS TO INQUIRE... WHY?

YEAH -- TELL 'EM I NEED THEIR HELP TO REPAY AN OLD DEBT. TELL 'EM IT'S THEIR DEBT, TOO! TELL 'EM THEY GOTTA HELP ME--

--FIND THE HULK!

THE AVENGER'S USUALLY IMPERTURBABLE BUTLER IS, NEEDLESS TO SAY, ASTONISHED!

NEXT: WHO'S BIG, GREEN AND HAS JUST INVADED THE SOVIET UNION?

CHAOS BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

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YOU MAY BE THE STRONGEST ***ONE*** THERE IS, HULK...

BUT THERE'S ***MORE*** THAN ONE OF--

--THE ***SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS!***

MILLER GROM

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

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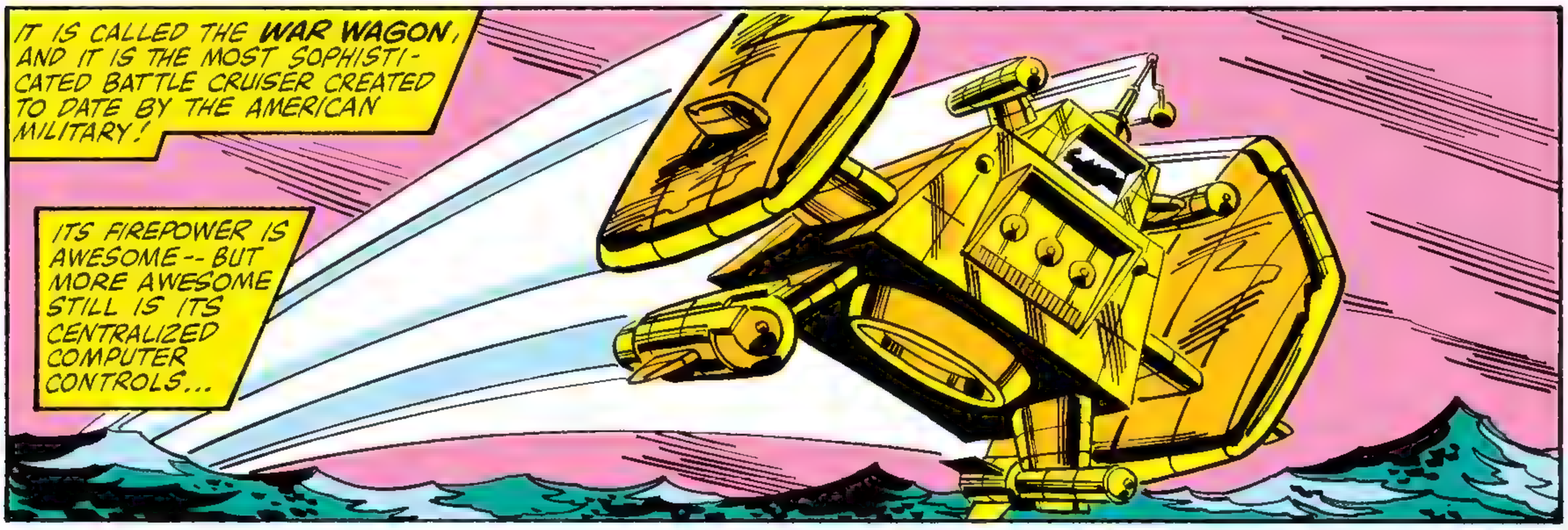
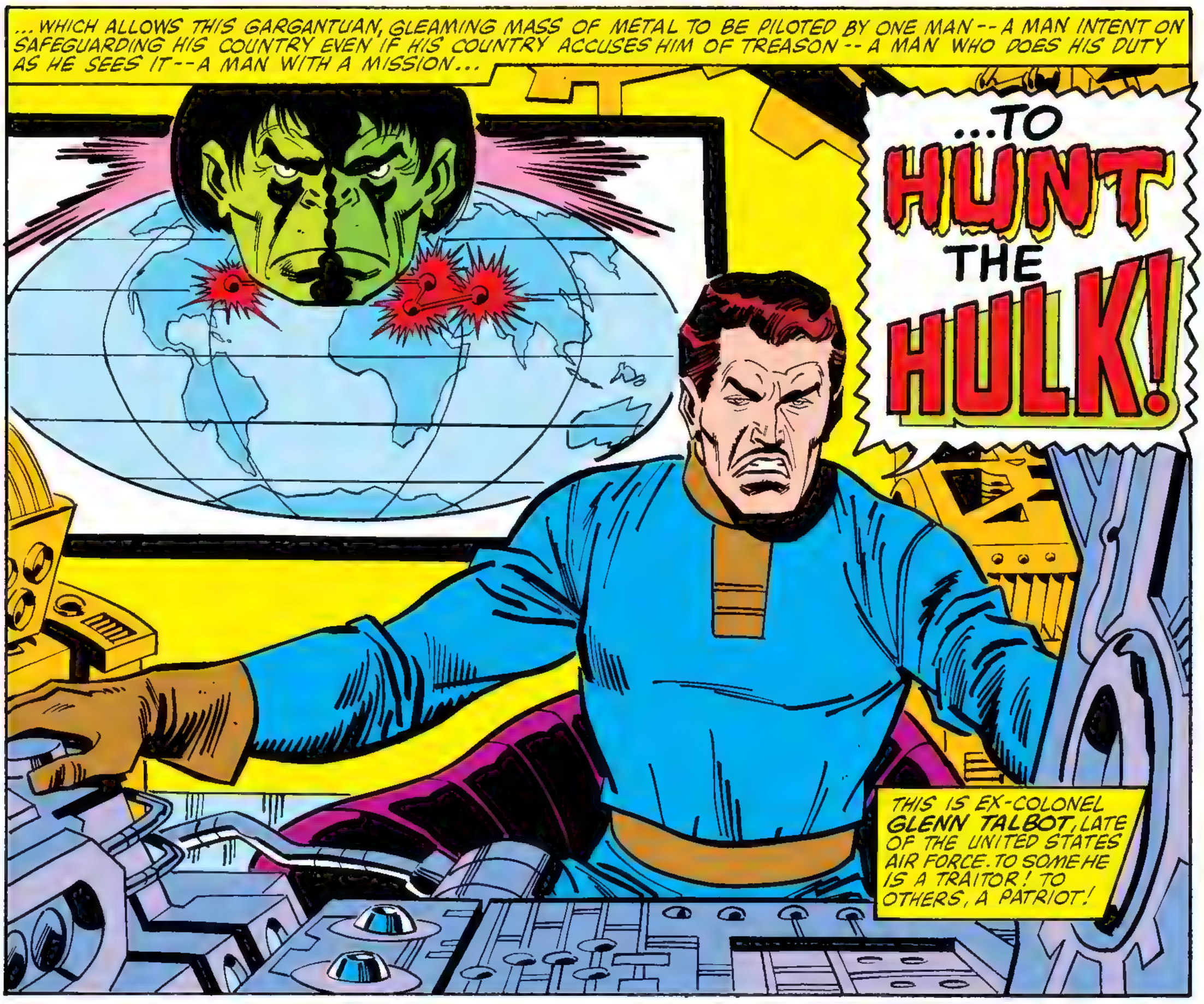


TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS DRIVEN A MAN--WHO HAD LABORED LONG AND LOYALLY IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY--TO ABSCOND WITH ONE OF HIS COUNTRY'S MOST SECRET WEAPONS, IT IS NECESSARY THAT WE EAVESDROP ON A CONVERSATION EVEN NOW TAKING PLACE BETWEEN GLENN TALBOT AND THAT QUASI-MILITARY COMMAND HE WAS SO PROUD TO HAVE CALLED HIS OWN... **GAMMA BASE!**

COL. TALBOT-- YOU MUST RETURN AT ONCE! DO YOU READ ME?

WE **KNOW** HE'S RECEIVING YOU CONGRESS-WOMAN MESSINGER.

HE'S JUST NOT ANSWERING.

HE **MUST!** HE CAN'T DEFY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT!

I HEARD THAT, CONGRESSWOMAN -- BUT YOU DON'T REPRESENT THE WHOLE USA!

THERE ARE MILLIONS WHO COWER IN HELPLESS HORROR--

--WHO LOOKED TO GAMMA BASE TO DEFEND THEM FROM THE RAVAGES OF THAT MAN-MONSTER... THE **HULK!**

BUT GAMMA BASE HAS BEEN SHUT DOWN, COLONEL -- BY AN ACT OF CONGRESS!

THE MENACE OF THE HULK WILL NOT BE MET BY ARMCHAIR EDICTS, CONGRESSWOMAN! THE ONLY LANGUAGE THAT BRUTE UNDERSTANDS IS FORCE, FORCE... AND **MORE** FORCE!

THAT IS THE REASON THE WAR WAGON WAS CREATED--TO WIPE OUT THE HULK, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

BUT YOU'RE COMMITTING **TREASON**, COLONEL--!

THAT, CONGRESSWOMAN, IS FOR HISTORY TO DECIDE!

GLENN TALBOT SIGNS OFF!

MEANWHILE, THOUSANDS OF KILOMETERS EASTWARD, A GREEN GOLIATH SLASHES THROUGH THE SKY, PROPELLED BY THE MIGHTIEST LEG MUSCLES KNOWN TO MAN!

THOUGH HE KNOWS NOTHING OF IT, HE IS THE RAISON D'ETRE FOR GLENN TALBOT'S MONSTER HUNT!

WERE HE TO BE INFORMED OF THAT FACT, HE WOULD EITHER NOT UNDERSTAND... OR NOT CARE!

FOR HE IS **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** --AND HE FEARS NOTHING THAT LIVES!

HULK IS HUNGRY-- BUT HULK DOES NOT SEE ANY FOOD!

EVERYWHERE HE GOES, ALL HULK SEES IS **WAR!**

INCREDIBLY, IN THE SPACE OF A DAY, THE HULK HAS LEAPED FROM THE SANDS OF EGYPT TO THE COLD MOUNTAIN PASSES OF THE NURISTAN PROVINCE OF AFGHANISTAN (LATITUDE 35°, LONGITUDE 72° FOR YOU GEOGRAPHY BUFFS--ACCURATE AL). LEGEND HAS IT THAT THE BLUE-EYED TRIBESMEN IN THIS REGION ARE DESCENDED FROM THE LOST LEGIONS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. IF SO, THEY COULD USE SOME OF HIS MILITARY GENIUS NOW.

PUNY HUMAN COMES! HULK WILL MAKE HIM TELL WHERE HULK CAN FIND FOOD!

HUNH?! PUNY HUMAN IGNORES HULK?!

HE DOES NOT RUN FROM HULK--SCREAMING--LIKE ALL THE REST!

WHY? MAN LOOKED *SCARED!*

BUT WHAT COULD SCARE MAN *MORE* THAN HULK--??!

THE ANSWER TO THE HULK'S RATHER PERCEPTIVE QUERY... IS THAT THE HORRORS OF *WAR* CAN SO FILL A MAN WITH TERROR THAT HE IS INCAPABLE OF FEELING ANY FURTHER FEAR--EVEN WHEN STARING IT IN ITS SNARLING GREEN FACE!

THE AFGHANI REBEL HAS SEEN HIS VILLAGE DESTROYED--HIS FAMILY KILLED--HIS COUNTRY OVER-RUN. HE HAS NO TERROR LEFT.

SOLDIERS!

⟨A MONSTER!⟩

⟨IT--IT CANNOT BE! SUCH MANI-FESTATIONS OF THE SUPER-NATURAL DO NOT EXIST!⟩

⟨THEN DO WE SHOOT AT IT--OR NOT--COMRADE MAJOR?!⟩

⟨YES, YOU DOLT! *SHOOT!*⟩*

*FIRST I TRANSLATE HEBREW, THEN EGYPTIAN, NOW RUSSIAN! WHAT DOES MANTLO THINK I AM?! --MULTILINGUAL MILGROM.

THE EXPLOSIVE SHELLS--OUTLAWED BY THE GENEVA ACCORDS--ERUPT FROM THE MUZZLES OF THE SOVIET SOLDIERS' KALISH-NIKOV RIFLES!

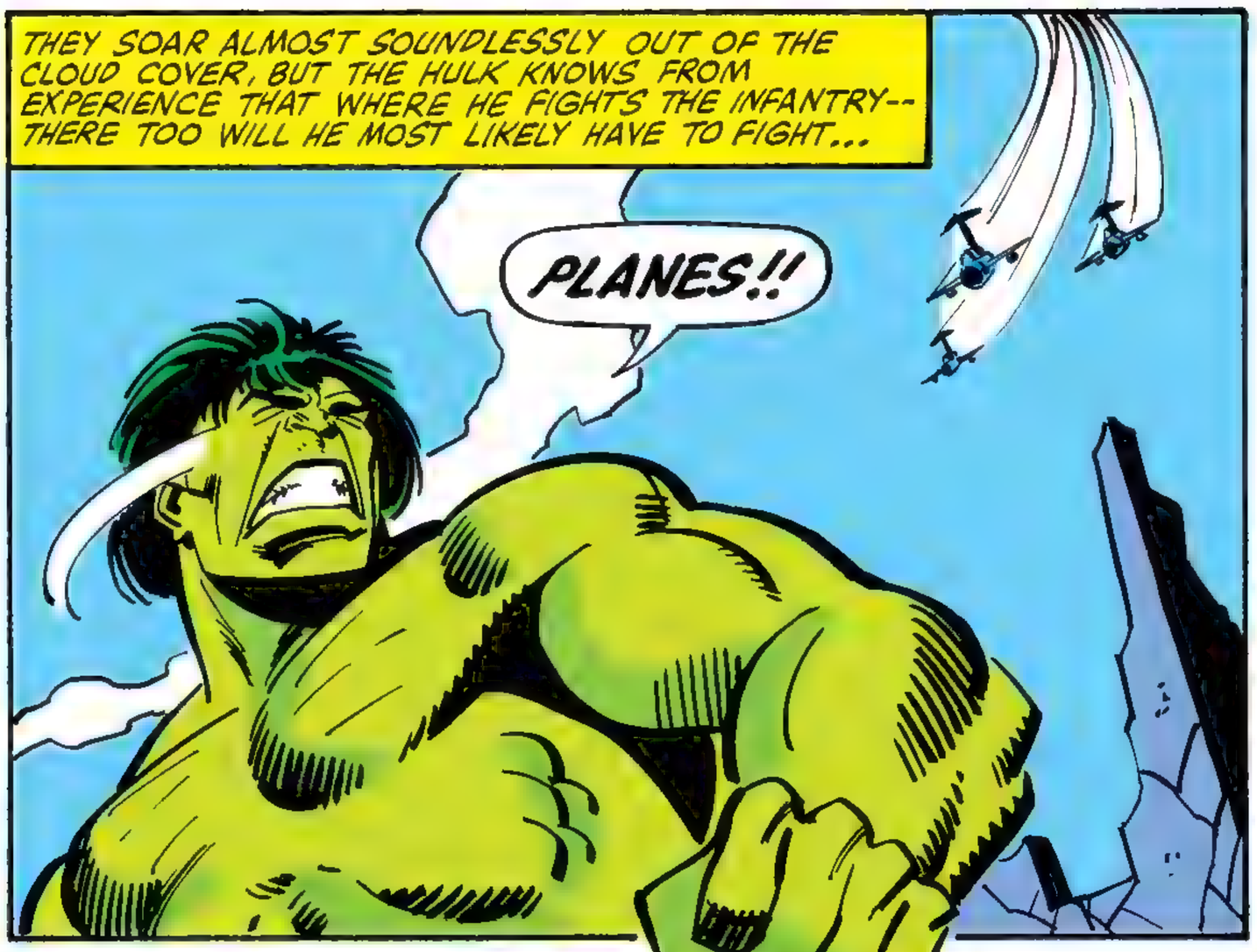
EVERYWHERE HULK GOES--IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME!

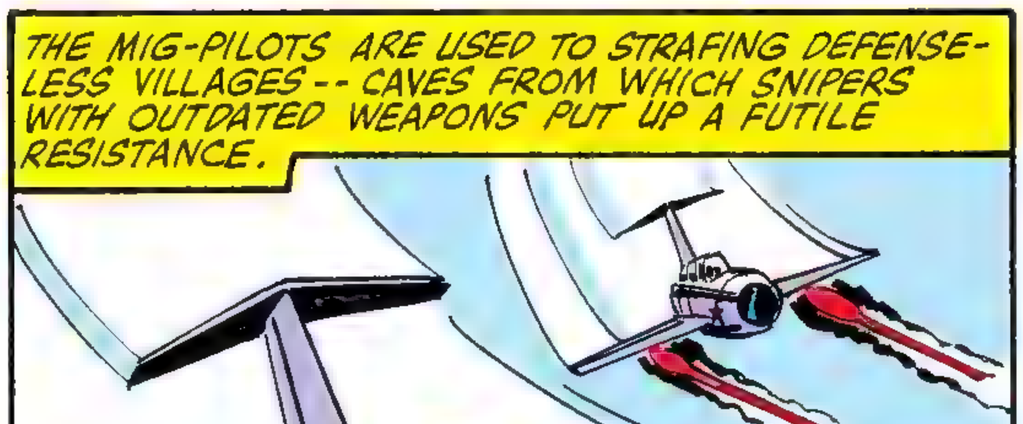
HULK DOES NOTHING--BUT SOLDIERS ATTACK HULK!

AND, EVERYWHERE THE HULK ENCOUNTERS SUCH SENSE-LESS ASSAULTS, THE JADE GIANT'S RESPONSE IS ALWAYS DEVASTATINGLY SIMILAR!

THRAM!

(DA--THAT IS RIGHT, COMRADE GENERAL! THE AFGHANI'S ARE CRUSHED-- BUT A DEMON NOW DEFENDS THEIR VILLAGE!)
(NO, COMRADE GENERAL--I HAVE NOT BEEN DRINKING ANY VODKA!)
(THEN YOU WILL SEND IN AN AIR STRIKE--?!)


THEY SOAR ALMOST SOUNDLESSLY OUT OF THE CLOUD COVER, BUT THE HULK KNOWS FROM EXPERIENCE THAT WHERE HE FIGHTS THE INFANTRY-- THERE TOO WILL HE MOST LIKELY HAVE TO FIGHT...
PLANES!!


THE MIG-PILOTS ARE USED TO STRAFING DEFENSE-LESS VILLAGES-- CAVES FROM WHICH SNIPERS WITH OUTDATED WEAPONS PUT UP A FUTILE RESISTANCE.
FROOSH
FROOSH
THEY HAVE NEVER HAD TO DEAL DESTRUCTION TO ...A DEMON!

PLANES SHOOT ROCKETS WHICH TURN EVERY-THING TO FIRE ABOUT HULK ??!
NAPALM-- ALSO OUTLAWED BY AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT!

HULK WILL MAKE PLANES STOP--

--BY TEARING PLANES OUT OF THE SKY!

FOR ONE TERRIFYING SECOND THE MIG PILOT WONDERS WHETHER THE CREATURE COMING AT HIM IS FLYING ...OR LEAPING!

SYAM!

THEN THE QUESTION BECOMES ACADEMIC!

〈TH-THE DEMON --HE HAS LANDED ON MY TAIL!〉

HULK DID NOT START THIS FIGHT WITH SOLDIERS--

--BUT HULK WILL FINISH IT!

GRAARRGHH!

ZZAK!

〈LENIN'S BEARD--HE HAS SHATTERED MY PLANE'S POWERLINES --AND THE CURRENT HOLDS HIM FAST AGAINST THE HULL!〉

〈THIS MAY BE OUR ONLY CHANCE! WE CANNOT DESTROY THE MONSTER, BUT-- IF I CAN PRESET THE DIRECTIONAL AND SPEED CONTROLS--〉

〈--I CAN THEN EJECT TO SAFETY--〉

〈--KNOWING THAT MY NOW PILOTLESS PLANE WILL CARRY THE DREAD DEMON ...TO CERTAIN DOOM!〉

THE HULK STRUGGLES AGAINST THE CURRENT WHICH HOLDS HIM TO THE JET!

BUT THE SOVIET PILOT--PERHAPS EXPECTING PRAISE, IF NOT A PROMOTION, FOR HIS FAST-THINKING--FINDS HIMSELF ACCUSED OF...

〈INCOMPETENCE! GROSS STUPIDITY! ***TREASON!***〉

〈B-BUT, COMRADE MAJOR--I HAVE SENT THE MONSTER AWAY!〉

〈YES, AWAY FROM THIS ***FOREIGN*** BATTLEFIELD WHERE HIS RAGE AND OUR RETALIATION HARMED NONE BUT THOSE WHOSE LAND WE WISHED TO OCCUPY!〉

〈DOLT! YOU HAVE DISPATCHED THE DEMON TOWARDS ***MOTHER RUSSIA*** HERSELF!〉

〈HEAR ME OUT, COMRADE MAJOR!〉

〈MY MIG IS ON AUTO-PILOT, CARRYING THE DEMON TOWARDS OUR HOMELAND, IT IS TRUE--BUT TO ONE CERTAIN SECTION OF THE SOVIET UNION FROM WHICH NOTHING MAY EVER RETURN... ALIVE!〉

〈YOU MEAN--?!〉

〈YES, COMRADE MAJOR--I HAVE SENT THE MONSTER TO... ***THE FORBIDDEN ZONE!***〉

*AT THE MERE MENTION OF THAT NAME, THE STAUNCH SOVIET SOLDIERS BLOOD RUNS COLD!*

*AND, THE NEXT INSTANT, AN AWESOME SHADOW FALLS OVER THE SHELL-SHATTERED TERRAIN!*

〈COMRADES--LOOK TO THE SKY!〉

〈FIRST A DEMON--AND NOW... WHAT??!〉

*IF THE HELMSMAN OF THE WONDROUS WAR WAGON EVEN NOTICES THE STUNNED SOVIET TROOPS BELOW HIM, HE GIVES NO INDICATION OF IT...*

*...FOR HIS MIND IS ON ONE GOAL--AND ONE GOAL ONLY!*

YOU ***WERE*** HERE, HULK--MERE MOMENTS AGO!

MY COMPUTERS HAVE TRACKED YOUR INFERNAL GAMMA TRAIL 'ROUND HALF THE GLOBE--TO AFGHANISTAN!*

*AS EVERYONE KNOWS, THE HULK IS A PRODUCT OF GAMMA IRRADIATION--ASSIDUOUS AL.

WAS IT ***YOU*** WHO CAUSED ALL THAT MINDLESS DESTRUCTION BELOW--OR THOSE SOVIET TROOPS WHO SO FUTILY FIRE UP AT MY PASSING WAR WAGON?

I'M IN ENEMY AIRSPACE, BUT I'D GO ANYWHERE--DARE ANYTHING--TO TRACK YOU DOWN, MONSTER!

BREEP BREEP

EH? MY TRACKING COMPUTER IS SIGNALLING--!

WHAT--?! IT CAN'T BE! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! AFTER FORSAKING MY CAREER--COMMITTING A TREASONOUS OFFENSE--ABSCONDING WITH GOVERNMENT PROPERTY--TRAVELING THOUSANDS OF SLEEPLESS MILES...

...I'VE LOST THE GAMMA TRAIL!!!

BUT THAT ISN'T POSSIBLE, UNLESS...

NO! THE HULK CAN'T BE ***DEAD***--UNLESS ***MINE*** IS THE HAND THAT KILLS HIM!

*THUS WE TAKE OUR LEAVE OF A RATHER PERTURBED GLENN TALBOT...*

...AND TRAVEL A FEW THOUSAND KILOMETERS NORTHEAST, TO THE VERY CAPITOL OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS!

MOSKVA!*

*I KNOW **WE** CALL IT MOSCOW, BUT ITS **THEIR** CITY! --EARNEST AL.

THERE, IN AN OBSCURE OFFICE DOWN AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY CORRIDOR OF THE KREMLIN, ONE COLONEL YURI BREVLOV LOOKS UP FROM A REPORT AS AN AIDE OPENS HIS DOOR.

〈YOUR PARDON, COMRADE COLONEL-- BUT THOSE YOU SUMMONED ARE HERE.〉

〈SEND THEM IN.〉

THE AID SNAPS TO HIS TASK, FOR YURI BREVLOV IS HEAD OF RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE -- THE KGB.

〈ENTER, COMRADES-- AT ONCE!〉

〈WE HAVE COME AT YOUR CALL, MY COLONEL.〉

〈READY, AS EVER, TO SERVE THE STATE!〉

〈AND JUSTICE, MY FRIENDS -- DO NOT FORGET JUSTICE!〉

COL. BREVLOV STUDIES THE TRIO BEFORE HIM. LIKE HIS AMERICAN COUNTERPART -- S.H.I.E.L.D. DIRECTOR, NICK FURY-- HE IS USED TO DEALING WITH RATHER IDIOSYNCRATIC AGENTS...

...BUT **SUPER-AGENTS** HAVE ALWAYS MADE HIM UNCOMFORTABLE!

〈COME IN, COMRADES.〉

*SUPREME HEADQUARTERS INTERNATIONAL ESPIONAGE LAW-ENFORCEMENT DIVISION --EXHAUSTED AL.

〈I HAVE MONITORED THE PROGRESS OF YOU **SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS** FOR QUITE SOME TIME.

〈YOU, **DIMITRI BUKHARIN**, HAVE MASTERED THE ARMOR CREATED BY THE ORIGINAL **CRIMSON DYNAMO.**

〈AND YOU **NICOLAI KRYLENKO** HAVE SERVED THE STATE WELL ...AS **VANGUARD.**

〈WHILE YOU, **LAYNIA PETROVNA**--〉

**DARK-STAR**, TOO, HAS SERVED HER PEOPLE, COMRADE COLONEL.〉

〈IT IS TO SERVE MOTHER RUSSIA THAT I AGAIN ASK YOU THREE TO UNITE AS A TEAM*--ADDING TO YOUR RANKS THE POWER OF ***MAJOR MIKHAIL URSUS.***〉

*WHICH THEY DID IN IRON MAN #109 --ARCHIVAL AL.

〈POWER? ALL I SEE, COMRADE COLONEL, IS A MAN IN A MILITARY UNIFORM!〉

〈DARKSTAR AND I KNOW COMRADE URSUS, CRIMSON DYNAMO-- FROM SCHOOL, MANY YEARS AGO.〉

〈YOU WOULD BE WISE NOT TO TAUNT HIM.〉

〈IN THAT CASE...〉

〈SINCE MY COMRADES-IN-ARMS VOUCH FOR YOU, WELCOME TO THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS!〉

〈MANY THANKS, COMRADE...〉

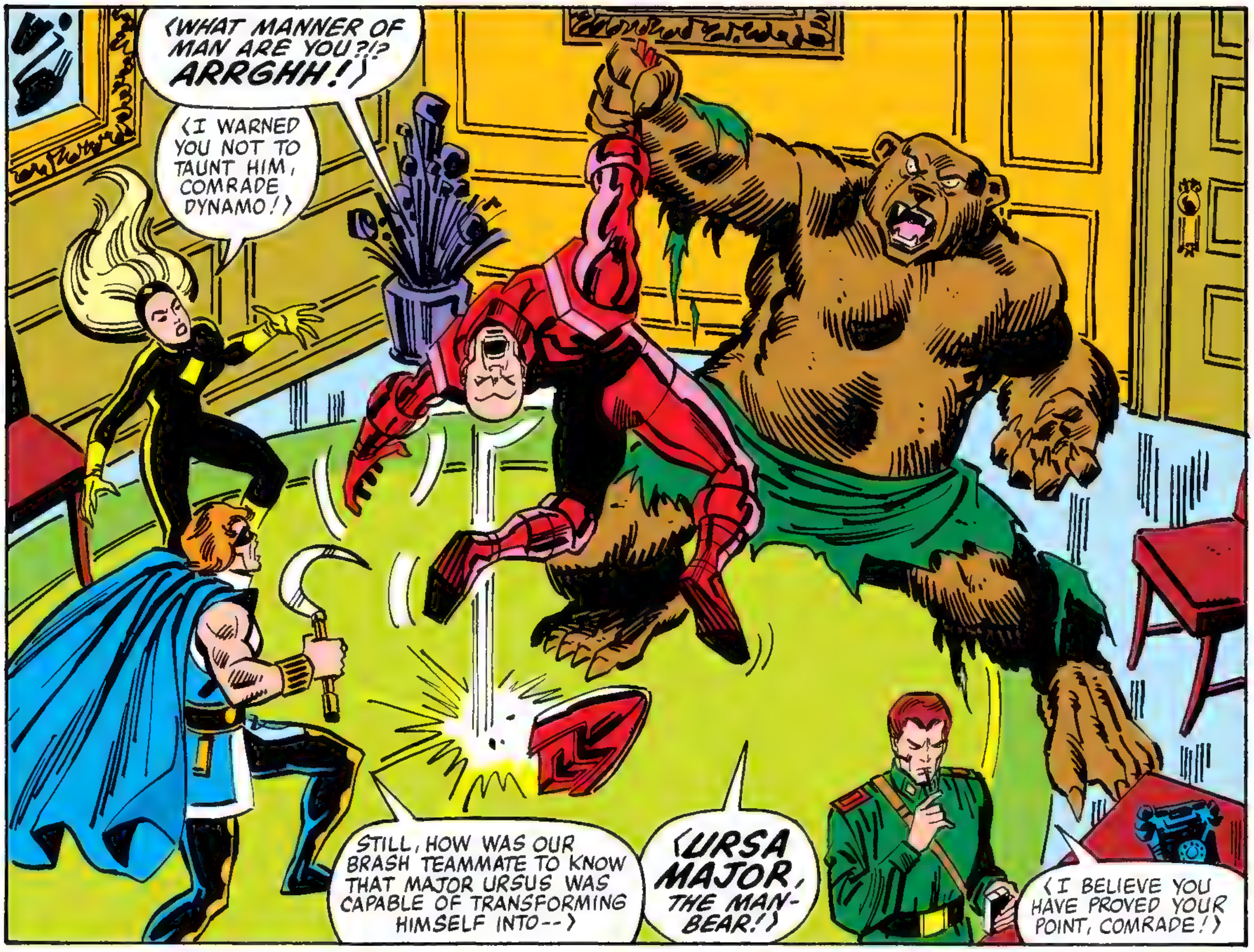
〈MY ***HAND--!***〉

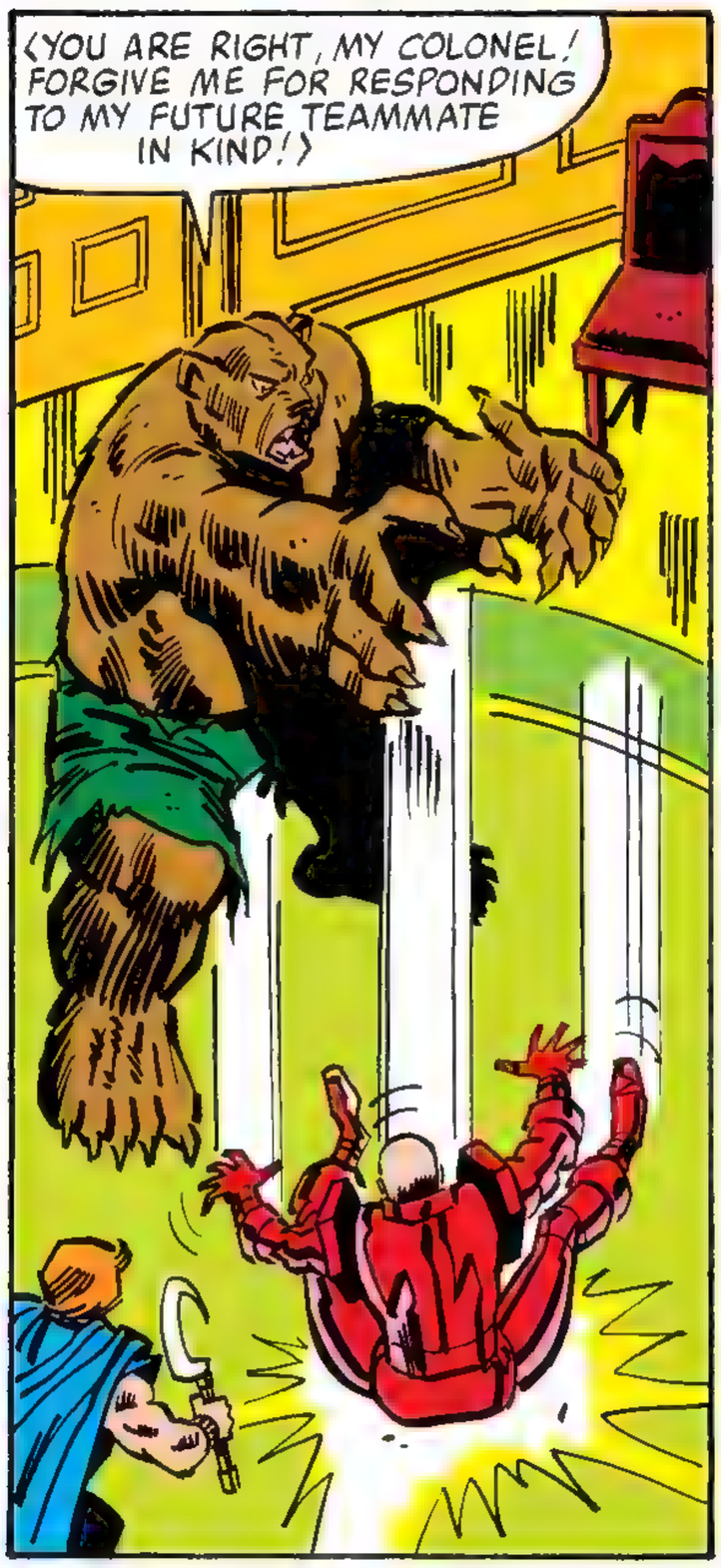
〈IS SOMETHING THE MATTER, COMRADE? I ASSURE YOU, I CLASP YOUR HAND WITH BUT THE SMALLEST FRACTION OF THE TRANSISTORIZED POWER OF MY ARMORED GAUNTLET!〉

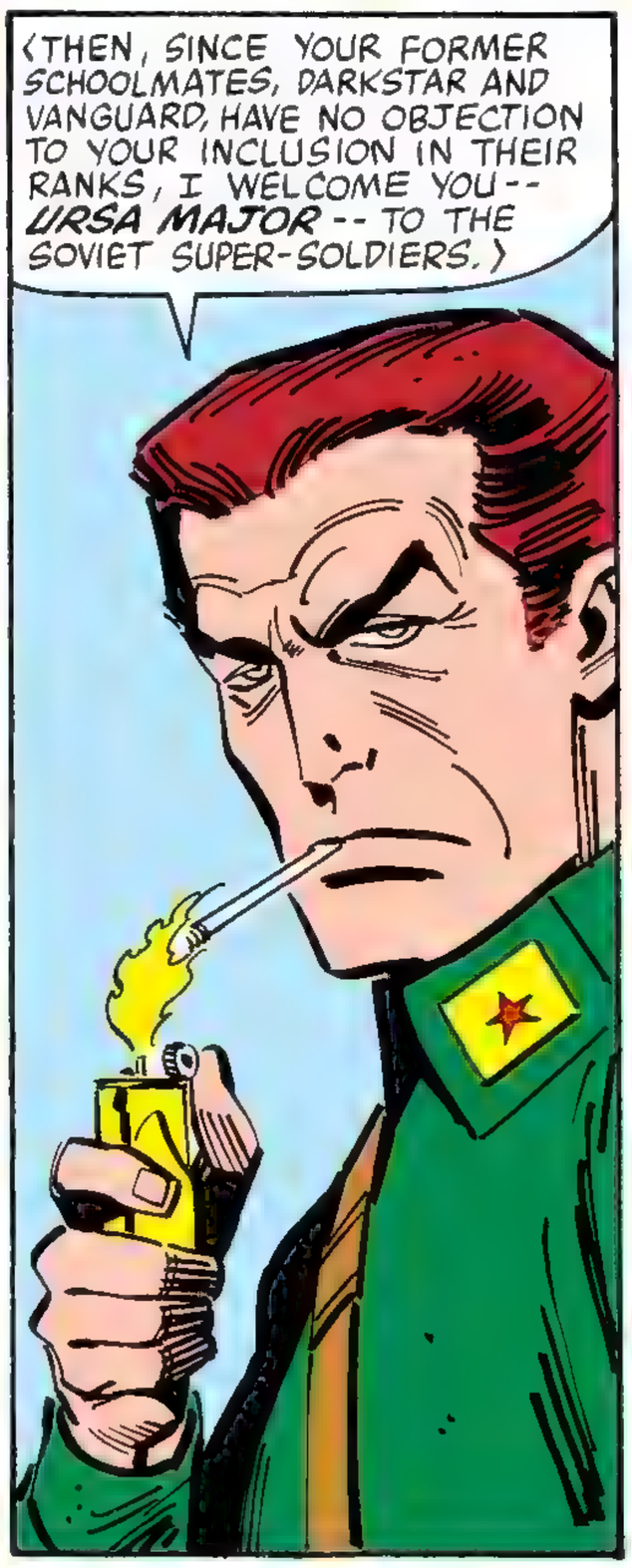
〈SURELY ANYONE WORTHY OF JOINING OUR RANKS SHOULD NOT FEEL ANY UNDUE PAIN FROM A MERE HANDSHAKE...〉

〈EH? YOUR GRIP GROWS-- STRONGER!〉

〈AND YOUR HAND --IT GROWS LARGER-- BECOMES A FUR-COVERED ***PAW!***〉


〈WHAT MANNER OF MAN ARE YOU?!? ARRGHH!〉
〈I WARNED YOU NOT TO TAUNT HIM, COMRADE DYNAMO!〉
STILL, HOW WAS OUR BRASH TEAMMATE TO KNOW THAT MAJOR URSUS WAS CAPABLE OF TRANSFORMING HIMSELF INTO--〉
〈URSA MAJOR, THE MAN-BEAR!〉
〈I BELIEVE YOU HAVE PROVED YOUR POINT, COMRADE!〉


〈YOU ARE RIGHT, MY COLONEL! FORGIVE ME FOR RESPONDING TO MY FUTURE TEAMMATE IN KIND!〉


〈THEN, SINCE YOUR FORMER SCHOOLMATES, DARKSTAR AND VANGUARD, HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOUR INCLUSION IN THEIR RANKS, I WELCOME YOU-- URSA MAJOR -- TO THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS.〉

〈IT IS GOOD TO BE REUNITED WITH MIKHAIL, COMRADE COLONEL -- BUT SURELY THAT IS NOT WHY YOU CALLED US HERE!〉
〈OF COURSE NOT, VANGUARD -- THE COLONEL HAS A MISSION HE WISHES US TO UNDERTAKE!〉
〈A MISSION AT WHICH ONLY YOU FOUR HAVE ANY HOPE OF SUCCEEDING!〉
〈TELL ME! HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF...〉

〈...THE FORBIDDEN ZONE?〉

〈YES, COMRADE COLONEL--IT HAS BEEN SPOKEN OF IN HUSHED, FEARFUL WHISPERS! IT IS A RADIOACTIVE REGION IN KHYSTYM--CAUSED, SOME SAY, BY A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT!〉

〈NO ONE GOES THERE--NO ONE COULD LIVE THERE! BUT I HAD HEARD ITS RADIOACTIVITY WAS CONTAINED...!〉

〈THE FORBIDDEN ZONE IS GROWING, URSA MAJOR--SOMEONE IS *MAKING* IT GROW!〉

〈BUT, WHO WOULD DO SUCH A THING, COLONEL? WHO WOULD HAVE SUCH *POWER*?!〉

〈ONE MAN WOULD, DARKSTAR--A MAN KNOWN ONLY AS...*SERGEI!*〉

〈THE *PRESENCE!*〉

〈BUT, COMRADE COLONEL--SERGEI IS *DEAD*--DESTROYED FOLLOWING HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE AMERICAN SUPER-GROUP--THE *DEFENDERS!**〉

〈THAT IS THE *OFFICIAL* VERSION, MAJOR--THE ONE WE WISHED THE WORLD AT LARGE TO BELIEVE.〉

*DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT! REREAD DEFENDERS #55.
--ADVISOR AL.

〈BUT SERGEI NEVER DIED. HE WITHDREW FROM THE HUMAN RACE FOR A TIME--AND THEN REAPPEARED TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE WITH HIS EQUALLY POWERFUL PARAMOUR... THE FORMER *RED GUARDIAN!**〉

〈KNOWING HOW HELPLESS CONVENTIONAL FORCE WOULD BE AGAINST THEM--WE LEFT THEM IN PEACE, HOPING THEY WOULD DO THE SAME TO US.〉

*ALSO DEFENDERS #65, ALSO AL.

〈THEY HAVE NOT! A MONTH AGO OUR INSTRUMENTS DETECDED A POWER-SURGE FROM KHYSTYM--AND THEN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE BEGAN TO GROW!〉

〈AT ITS PRESENT RATE OF EXPANSION, ALL RUSSIA WILL BECOME AN IRRADIATED WASTELAND IN A MATTER OF WEEKS! WE KNOW OF ONLY ONE POSSIBLE WAY TO STOP IT...〉

〈BY STOPPING *SERGEI* AND HIS MATE! SAY NO MORE, COMRADE COLONEL--THE *SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS* KNOW WHAT WE MUST DO!〉

〈ENTER THE FORBIDDEN ZONE?!〉

〈WE ARE THE ONLY ONES WITH THE *POWER* TO DARE TRY!〉

〈WE MUST DO MORE THAN TRY, VANGUARD--WE MUST *PREVAIL!*〉

〈I MUST TELL YOU -- ONCE YOU ENTER THE FORBIDDEN ZONE THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP YOU! YOU FIGHT ON YOUR OWN! NOW, A JET IS FUELED AND READY... 〉

〈WE HAVE NO NEED OF SUCH A CONVEYANCE, COMRADE COLONEL -- NOT WHILE DARKSTAR COMMANDS... THE *DARKFORCE!*〉

*THE CRACKLING ENERGY CRESCENT SPREADS FROM DARKSTAR'S FINGERTIPS, AND A NANOSECOND LATER SHE AND HER TEAMMATES ARE...*

〈GONE!〉

〈I KNOW IT IS A BOURGEOIS THING TO SAY, COMRADES -- BUT MAY GOD BE WITH YOU!〉

*MEANWHILE, RIDING A RUNAWAY JET THROUGH SOVIET AIRSPACE, THE RAGING, RAMPAGING HULK HAS REACHED THE LIMITS OF HIS ADMITTEDLY MINISCULE PATIENCE!*

ST-ST-STUPID PL-PL-PLANE W-W-WON'T L-L-LET G-G-GO OF H-H-HULK...

*...THEN HULK WILL **SMASH** STUPID PLANE!*

*THE HULK IS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD, SHATTERING THE POWER-DRIVE WHOSE KILLING CURRENT HAD HELD HIM IN ITS ELECTRICAL GRIP!*

**SHAVAM!**

*UNFORTUNATELY, THE JADE GIANT HAS OVERLOOKED THE FACT THAT, WITHOUT THE JET BENEATH HIM, HE IS LEFT STRANDED THOUSANDS OF METERS UP IN THE AIR --*

*-- WITH NOWHERE TO GO BUT... **DOWN!***

**THROOM**

BUT THE MIGHTY MAN-MONSTER HAS FALLEN FROM FEARSOME HEIGHTS BEFORE... AND ALWAYS HE HAS SURVIVED!

HUNH! GOOD! HULK HAS GOTTEN OFF OF STUPID PLANE!

BUT WHERE IS HULK NOW?!

FROM SOMEWHERE, IN THE DIM DARK RECESSES OF HIS MONSTROUS MIND, THE HULK RETRIEVES... A MEMORY!

YES, HULK HAS BEEN HERE BEFORE--DOESN'T REMEMBER WHEN! ALL HULK KNOWS IS THAT HE DIDN'T LIKE IT THEN--

--AND DOESN'T LIKE IT NOW!

HULK CAME HERE WITH ***FRIENDS*** --THE ***DEFENDERS!*** HULK WONDERS WHERE THEY ARE NOW?*

HUNH? EVERYTHING GLOWS HERE--

--BUT LIGHT INSIDE THAT BUILDING IS BRIGHTER THAN THE REST!

*IN EXTREMIS, AS USUAL, IN THE PAGES OF THEIR OWN DYNAMIC MAG. --ADVERTISIN' AL.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK STRIDES TOWARDS THE LIGHT...

...LIKE A JADE GREEN MOTH DRAWN TOWARDS AN ANNIHILATING FLAME!

SO SINGLE-MINDED IS THE GREEN GARGANTUA'S ADVANCE, THAT HE FAILS TO NOTICE A SILENT OBSERVER STANDING IN THE SHADOWS...

(THE AMERICAN MAN-MONSTER CALLED THE HULK--IT CAN ONLY BE HE! BUT WHY HAS HE VENTURED INTO THE ***FORBIDDEN ZONE***--?!

(AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT EFFECT WILL HIS ARRIVAL HAVE ON MY WELL-LAID PLANS?)*

BUT THE HULK'S HIDDEN OBSERVER REMAINS OUT OF SIGHT--

*NOW I'VE EVEN GOTTA TRANSLATE RUSSIAN THOUGHT-BALLOONS?! SHEESH! -- PUT-UPON AL.

--ALLOWING THE GREEN GOLIATH TO ADVANCE UNIMPEDED, DEEP INTO THE AWESOME ARCHITECTURAL ACHIEVEMENT THAT NOW LIES IN RUPTURED RUINS!

***THIS*** IS WHERE THE BRIGHT LIGHT COMES FROM! NOW HULK IS ***SURE*** HE HAS BEEN HERE BEFORE--

--FOR HULK REMEMBERS STAR-GIRL AND GOLDEN MAN!

HOWEVER, IF THE BEINGS RECALL -- OR EVEN NOTICE -- THE GAPING GREEN FIGURE BELOW THEM, THEY GIVE NO INDICATION OF IT! INSTEAD, ENCIRCLED BY A COSMIC CORONA, THEY COMMUNE IN INDESCRIBABLE WAYS...

...FOR HE WHO IS **SERGEI -- THE PRESENCE** -- AND SHE WHO WAS THE SOVIET SUPER-HEROINE-THE **RED GUARDIAN** -- HAVE BOTH TRANSCENDED CURIOSITY... AND MOST OTHER HUMAN CONCERNS!

HUNH! STAR-GIRL USED TO BE HULK'S FRIEND -- BUT NOW SHE DOESN'T EVEN LOOK AT HULK!

**BAH!** WHAT DOES HULK CARE? **ALL** HULK'S FRIENDS HAVE DESERTED HULK!

BEHIND THE HULK, A BLACK HOLE APPEARS IN MIDAIR...

...AND THROUGH IT STEPS A GRIM-FACED, FIGHTING FOURSOME!

〈COMRADES -- LOOK! THE FORBIDDEN ZONE PRODUCES... MONSTERS!〉

〈A STRANGE OBSERVATION, URSA MAJOR, FROM ONE WHO IS HARDLY LESS MONSTROUS HIMSELF!〉

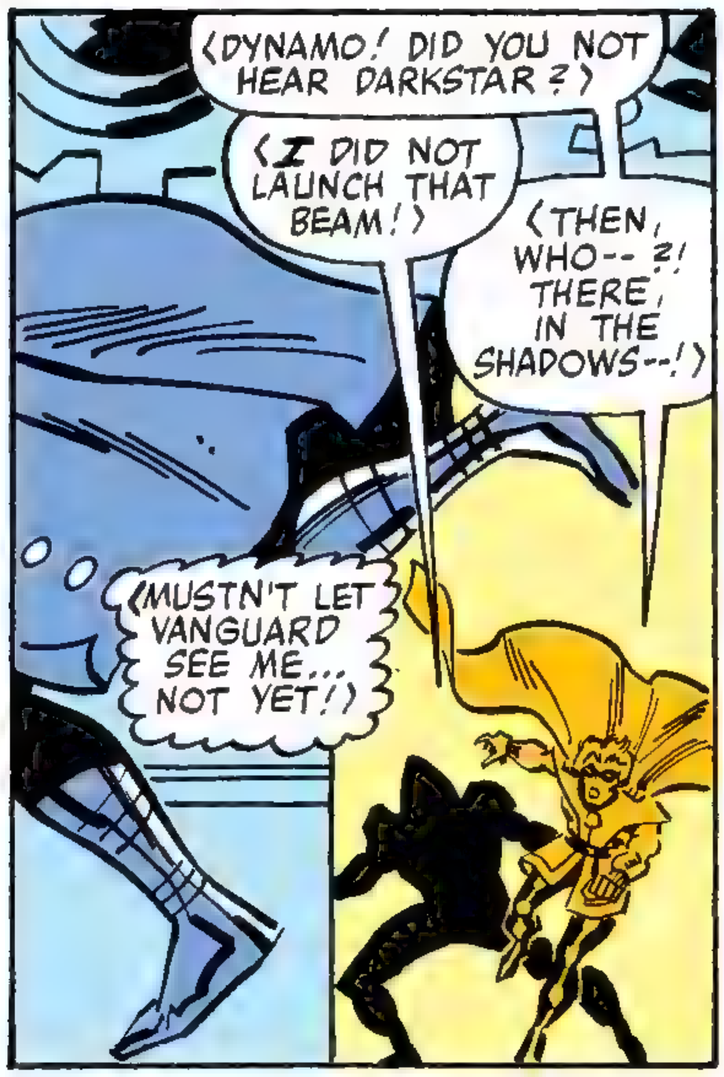
〈BUT, FEAR NOT! MY **ELECTRO-THRUST** BEAM WILL BRING **THAT** MONSTER TO ITS KNEES!〉

〈DYNAMO, NO! THE CREATURE YOU ATTACK IS NO CREATION OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE!〉

〈HE IS AN AMERICAN -- ***THE HULK!****〉

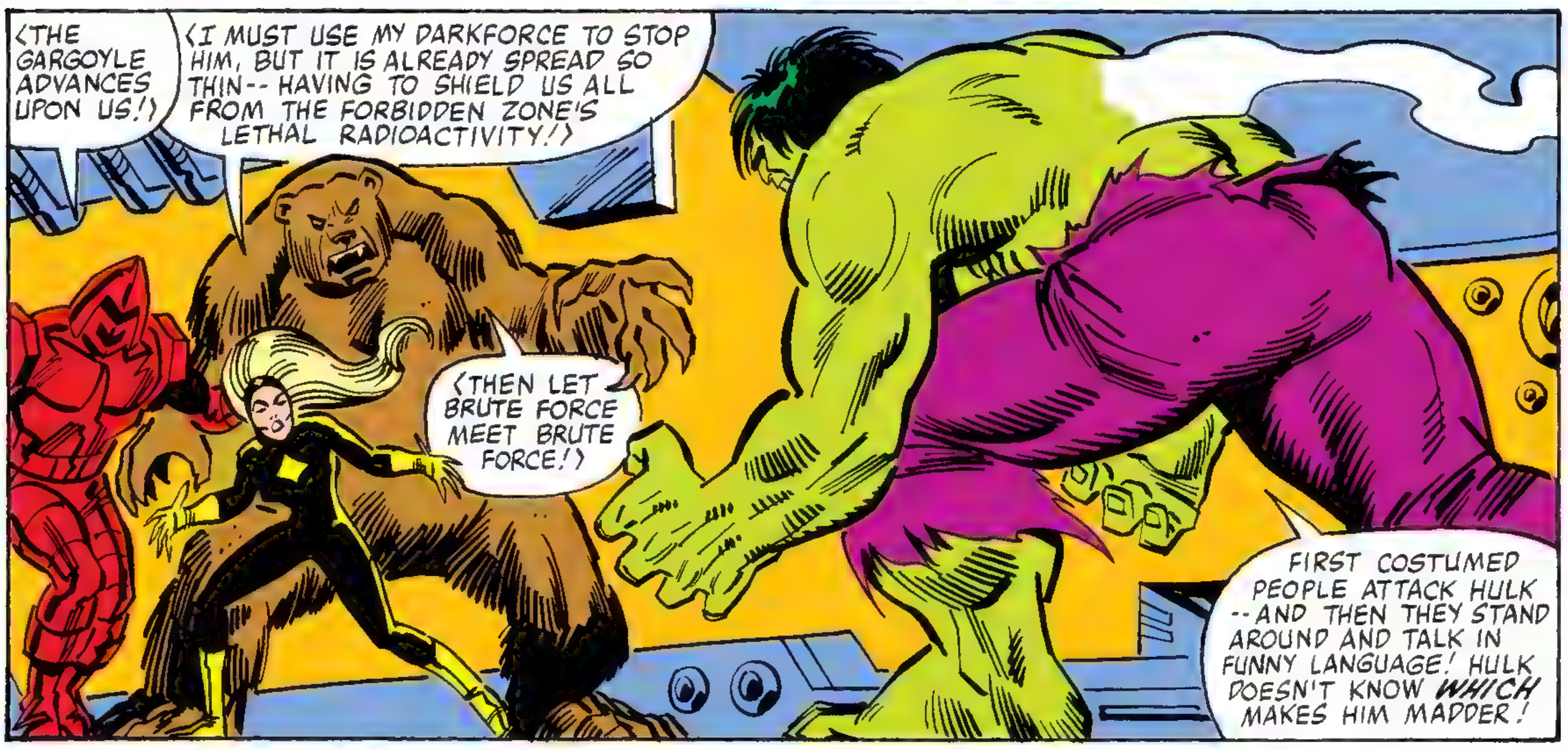
ARRHH!

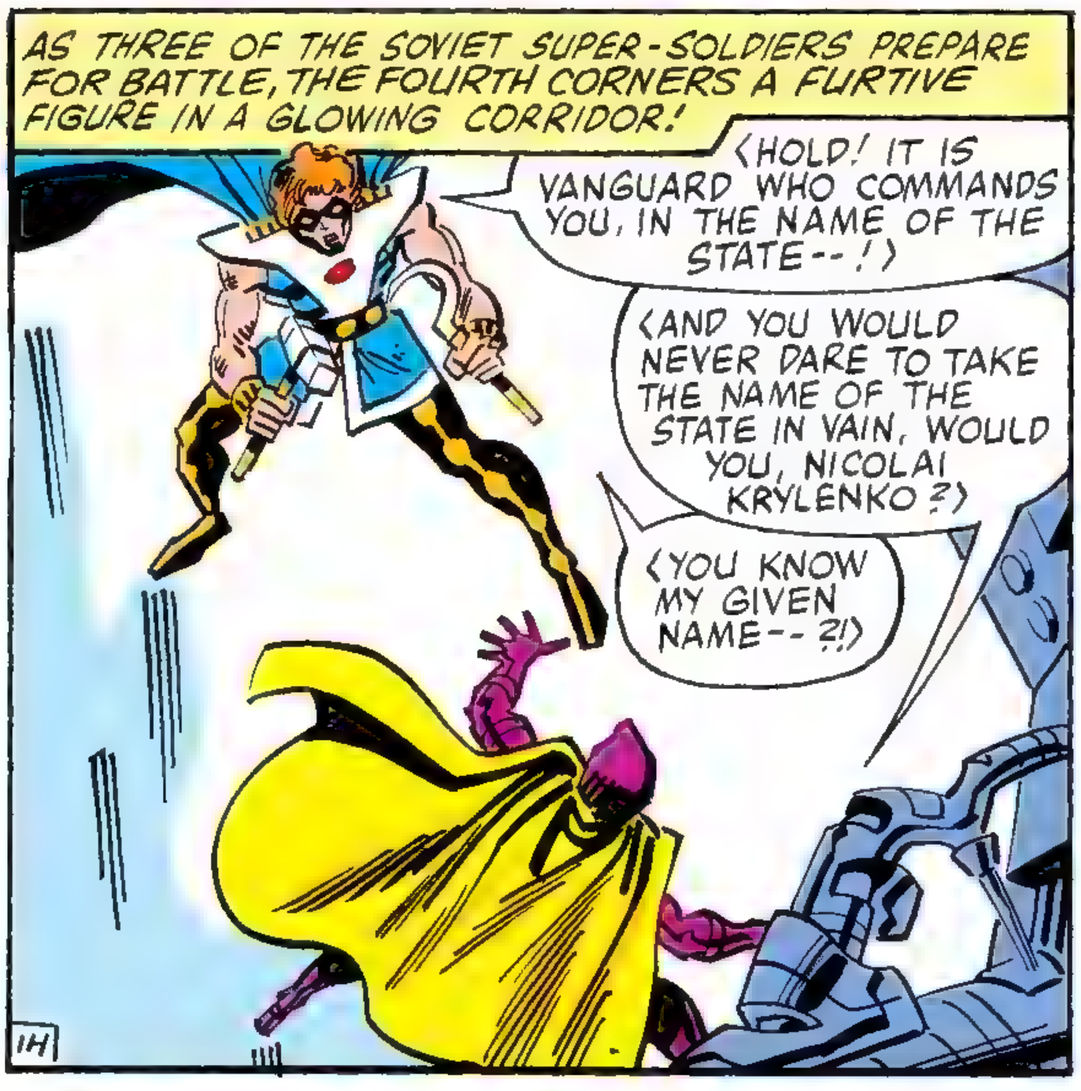
*DARKSTAR KNOWS 'CAUSE SHE MET OL' GREENSKIN IN CHAMPIONS #16. --KNOW-IT-ALL AL.

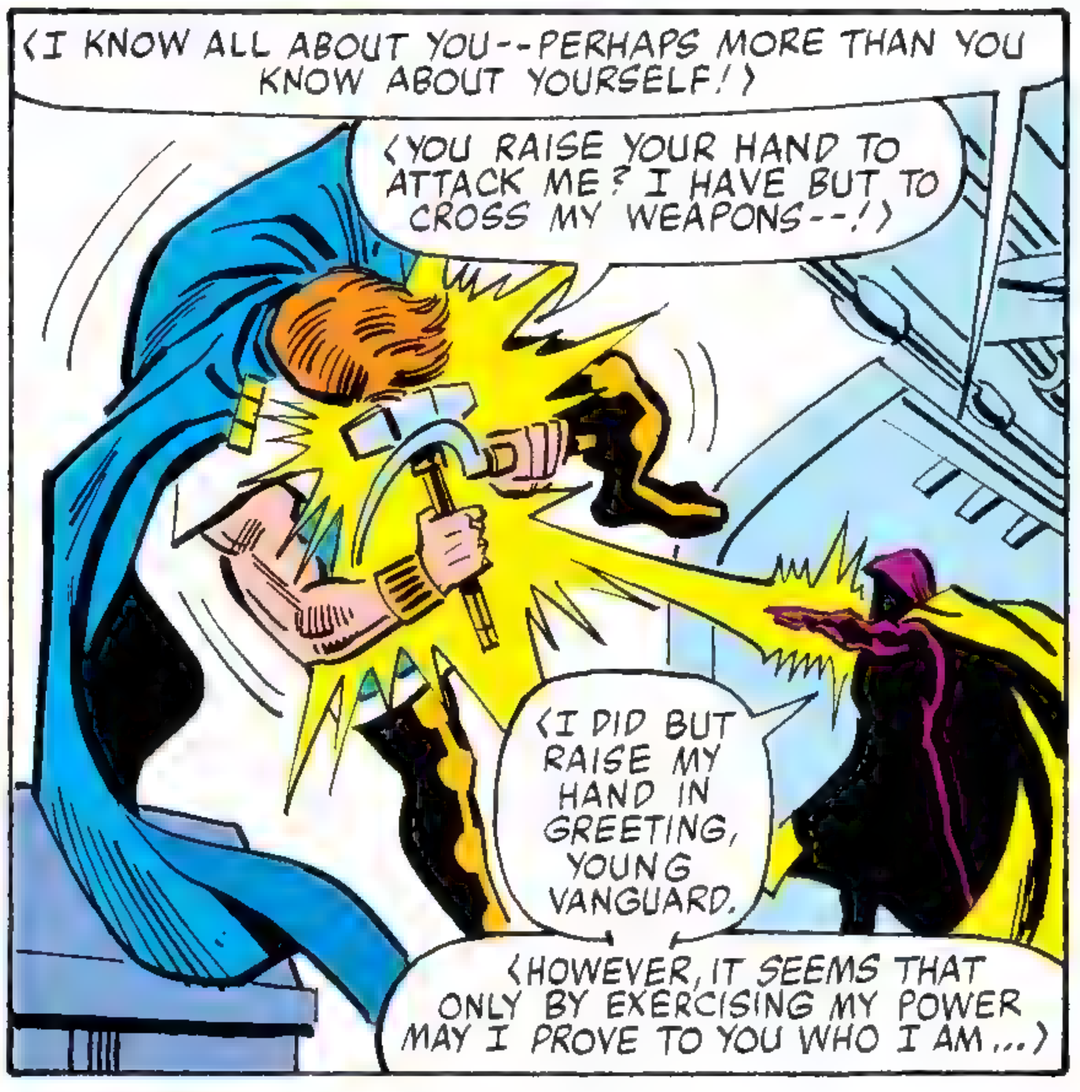

〈DYNAMO! DID YOU NOT HEAR DARKSTAR?〉
〈I DID NOT LAUNCH THAT BEAM!〉
〈THEN, WHO--?! THERE, IN THE SHADOWS--!〉
〈MUSTN'T LET VANGUARD SEE ME... NOT YET!〉

〈WAS THAT OUR FOE-- SERGEI?!〉
〈THE PRESENCE WOULD NOT ATTACK FROM HIDING AND THEN SLINK AWAY!〉
〈NO! THERE IS ANOTHER HERE--〉

〈--AND IT SEEMS THE PURPOSE OF HIS UNPROVOKED ATTACK WAS TO LEAVE US TO FACE THE HULK'S RAGE!〉
GNNRRAARRGHH!


〈THE GARGOYLE ADVANCES UPON US!〉
〈I MUST USE MY DARKFORCE TO STOP HIM, BUT IT IS ALREADY SPREAD SO THIN-- HAVING TO SHIELD US ALL FROM THE FORBIDDEN ZONE'S LETHAL RADIOACTIVITY!〉
〈THEN LET BRUTE FORCE MEET BRUTE FORCE!〉
FIRST COSTUMED PEOPLE ATTACK HULK --AND THEN THEY STAND AROUND AND TALK IN FUNNY LANGUAGE! HULK DOESN'T KNOW WHICH MAKES HIM MADDER!


AS THREE OF THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS PREPARE FOR BATTLE, THE FOURTH CORNERS A FURTIVE FIGURE IN A GLOWING CORRIDOR!
〈HOLD! IT IS VANGUARD WHO COMMANDS YOU, IN THE NAME OF THE STATE--!〉
〈AND YOU WOULD NEVER DARE TO TAKE THE NAME OF THE STATE IN VAIN, WOULD YOU, NICOLAI KRYLENKO?〉
〈YOU KNOW MY GIVEN NAME--?!〉
IH


〈I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU--PERHAPS MORE THAN YOU KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF!〉
〈YOU RAISE YOUR HAND TO ATTACK ME? I HAVE BUT TO CROSS MY WEAPONS--!〉
〈I DID BUT RAISE MY HAND IN GREETING, YOUNG VANGUARD.
〈HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THAT ONLY BY EXERCISING MY POWER MAY I PROVE TO YOU WHO I AM...〉

〈NYET! IT-- IT IS NOT POSSIBLE! NEVER BEFORE HAVE MY CROSSED HAMMER AND SICKLE FAILED TO TURN THE FORCE OF AN OPPONENT'S WEAPONRY BACK UPON HIM-- !〉

〈THAT IS BECAUSE NEVER BEFORE HAVE THEY BEEN TURNED AGAINST THE ONE WHO *CREATED* THEM.〉

〈BY THE ONE WHO--??! *YOU!* YOUR MASK MUFFLED YOUR VOICE AT FIRST, BUT NOW I *KNOW* YOU!〉

〈LENIN'S BEARD, *AFTER ALL THESE YEARS--!*〉

WHAT VANGUARD HAS DISCOVERED WILL HAVE TO WAIT--

*--AND THE SCENE SHIFTS TO HIS COMRADES AT-ARMS!*

HULK, HEAR ME! I WILL ADDRESS YOU IN YOUR OWN TONGUE! *

THOUGH YOUR MONSTER'S MIND MAY NOT RECALL, WE FOUGHT AS ALLIES ONCE AGAINST MAGNETO AND DR. DOOM! **

*YEAH, SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH--BUT ONE MORE FOOTNOTE AND I'M GONNA SCREAM!--OVERWHELMED AL!

**I'LL DO IT FOR YOU, AL! *YARRGH!* --JOVIAL JIM.

***NOT ANOTHER ONE THIS ISH, I PROMISE! --BOISTEROUS BILL.

NOW, HOWEVER, YOU ARE INTERFERING IN A TASK THAT MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED QUICKLY, IF MOTHER RUSSIA--AND, PERHAPS, THE WORLD--ARE TO SURVIVE!

THUS, MAY THE POWER OF THE DARKFORCE HOLD YOU UNTIL OUR MISSION IS DONE!

GIRL SAYS SHE AND HULK WERE FRIENDS-- AND THEN TRIES TO HURT HULK WITH BLACKNESS?!

HULK MAY BE A MONSTER, BUT HULK UNDERSTANDS THAT FRIENDS DO NOT HURT FRIENDS!

SOMETIMES THEY DO, HULK! SOMETIMES THEY HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE WHEN THE VERY FUTURE SEEMS AT STAKE!

WHILE THE MIND OF THE GREEN GOLIATH IS CAPABLE OF GREATER SUBTLETY THAN MOST SUSPECT--

--WHEN ATTACKED, IT IS HIS ANGER THAT INEVITABLY WINS OVER HIS CHILDLIKE INTELLECT!

MAKE BLACKNESS GO AWAY, GIRL! **LET HULK GO!!!**

THE RUSSIAN LASS IS BRAVE, HAVING STRUCK FIRST TO SPARE HER COMRADES FROM THE HULK'S BLUDGEONING FISTS...

〈OH! THE STRAIN --TOO GREAT!〉

...BUT THE DARK-FORCE IS PART OF HER, AND ANY ATTACK ON IT--

--FEEDS BACK AS A PHYSICAL ASSAULT ON DARK-STAR, AS WELL!

POWERS OR NO SUPER-POWERS, THERE ARE FEW WHO CAN WITHSTAND THE OVERWHELMING RAGE OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

BLACKNESS IS GONE --HULK IS FREE! BUT HULK MEANT ONLY TO HURT BLACKNESS, NOT GIRL--!

〈YOU MISBEGOTTEN MONSTROSITY! WE ALLOWED DARK-STAR TO APPROACH YOU FIRST...〉

〈SHE WISHED TO SUBDUE YOU WITHOUT HARMING YOU! BUT NOW, YOU MUST ANSWER TO *URSA MAJOR* AND THE *CRIMSON DYNAMO!*〉

COSTUMED MEN YELL AT HULK IN FUNNY LANGUAGE AGAIN!

IF THAT MEANS YOU ARE READY TO ATTACK HULK-- THEN COME! HULK IS READY FOR YOU! HULK WILL SMASH YOU BOTH!

MEANWHILE, MORE THAN HALF A WORLD AWAY...

I DON'T GET IT! I COME TO AVENGERS MANSION ASKING HELP IN FINDING THE HULK -- AND JARVIS ASKS ME TO WAIT OUT HERE ON THE STOOP!

ME -- RICK JONES -- WHO WAS *ALMOST* AN AVENGER ONCE!

THEN, WHEN THE DOOR FINALLY OPENS AGAIN...

IT *IS* RICK, JARVIS -- NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. LET HIM IN.

I SUSPECTED IT WAS, SIR -- BUT WITHOUT A RETINAPRINT ON FILE...

A WHAT??

SECURITY PRECAUTION, RICK. A LOT HAS CHANGED SINCE YOU WERE HERE LAST.

YEAH, I GUESS SO.

YOU TOLD JARVIS YOU NEEDED HELP -- TO FIND THE HULK?

RIGHT. YOU SEE, I GOT TO THINKING ABOUT HOW BRUCE BANNER BECAME THE HULK -- BY SAVING MY LIFE -- AND ABOUT HOW I RAN OUT ON HIM WHEN HE NEEDED ME...

COME ON, RICK -- YOU KNOW THE HULK HAD BECOME TOO SAVAGE FOR ANYONE TO HELP -- OR HURT!

YEAH, WELL -- I STILL OWE OL' GREENSKIN, CAP.

I'VE ALWAYS ADMIRED YOUR LOYALTY TO THAT JADE GIANT, LAD -- BUT JUST WHAT IS IT YOU WANT THE AVENGERS TO DO?

I WANT YOU TO *SAVE* THE HULK, CAP!

SEE, COL. GLENN TALBOT OF GAMMA BASE HAS, WELL, GONE OFF THE DEEP END...

AND FLED THE COUNTRY IN SOME NEW, ULTRASECRET BATTLE-CRUISER CALLED THE WAR WAGON? YES, WE'VE HAD A REPORT!

YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT IN THINKING TALBOT PLANS TO USE THE WAR WAGON TO HUNT THE HULK -- BUT THERE'S NOTHING THE AVENGERS CAN DO.

WE'D LIKE TO -- BUT THE HULK'S BEEN SPOTTED BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN, AND THE AVENGERS ALMOST CAUSED AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT BY GOING THERE WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION RECENTLY! *

*I CAN'T DO IT! I PROMISED! --ABASHED BILL.

RUSSIA, HUH? BUT WHAT IF THE HULK MAKES IT -- BACK TO THE STATES, I MEAN?

THEN ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CALL ON US, RICK.

SCOUT'S HONOR, CAP?

MY WORD AS AN *AVENGER*, SON.

*AND SO, SOME MOMENTS LATER...*

I SEE CAP'S POINT. THE AVENGERS CAN'T RISK STARTING WORLD WAR III JUST TO FIND THE HULK.

BUT MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING I CAN DO WHILE I'M WAITING FOR THE HULK TO HOP-FROG IT HOME.

YEAH, AND I KNOW JUST *WHAT* THAT SOMETHING IS!

*RICK JONES STRIDES PURPOSEFULLY UPTOWN, AN IDEA BREWING IN HIS BRAIN...*

... WHILE, IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE, AN EPIC BATTLE RAGES ON!

<LET ME BE THE FIRST TO STRIKE, DYNAMO!>

<NO, URSA MAJOR! YOU ARE STRONG INDEED-->

<--BUT THE CREATOR OF THE CRIMSON DYNAMO ARMOR CONSTRUCTED IT TO RIVAL THAT OF THE AMERICAN *IRON MAN!*>

<THOUGH I HAVE HEARD IT SAID IN AWED WHISPERS THAT NOT EVEN IRON MAN *AND* HIS FELLOW AVENGERS HAVE EVER PREVAILED AGAINST THE HULK!>

KROOM!

<STILL, I WILL TRY TO HOLD THE MONSTER WHILE YOU REVIVE DARKSTAR! REMEMBER, THOUGH MY ARMOR PROTECTS ME--ONLY HER DARKFORCE SHIELDS YOU TWO FROM THE RADIATION!

ARMORED MAN DOES NOTHING BUT JABBER! DOES ARMORED MAN WANT TO TALK--OR *FIGHT*?!?

<HE...IS AS POWERFUL AS I FEARED, URSA MAJOR! GO! TEND TO OUR FALLEN COMRADE! FIND VANGUARD! TOGETHER GO AFTER SERGEI!>

<I WILL HOLD THE HULK... AS LONG AS I CAN!>

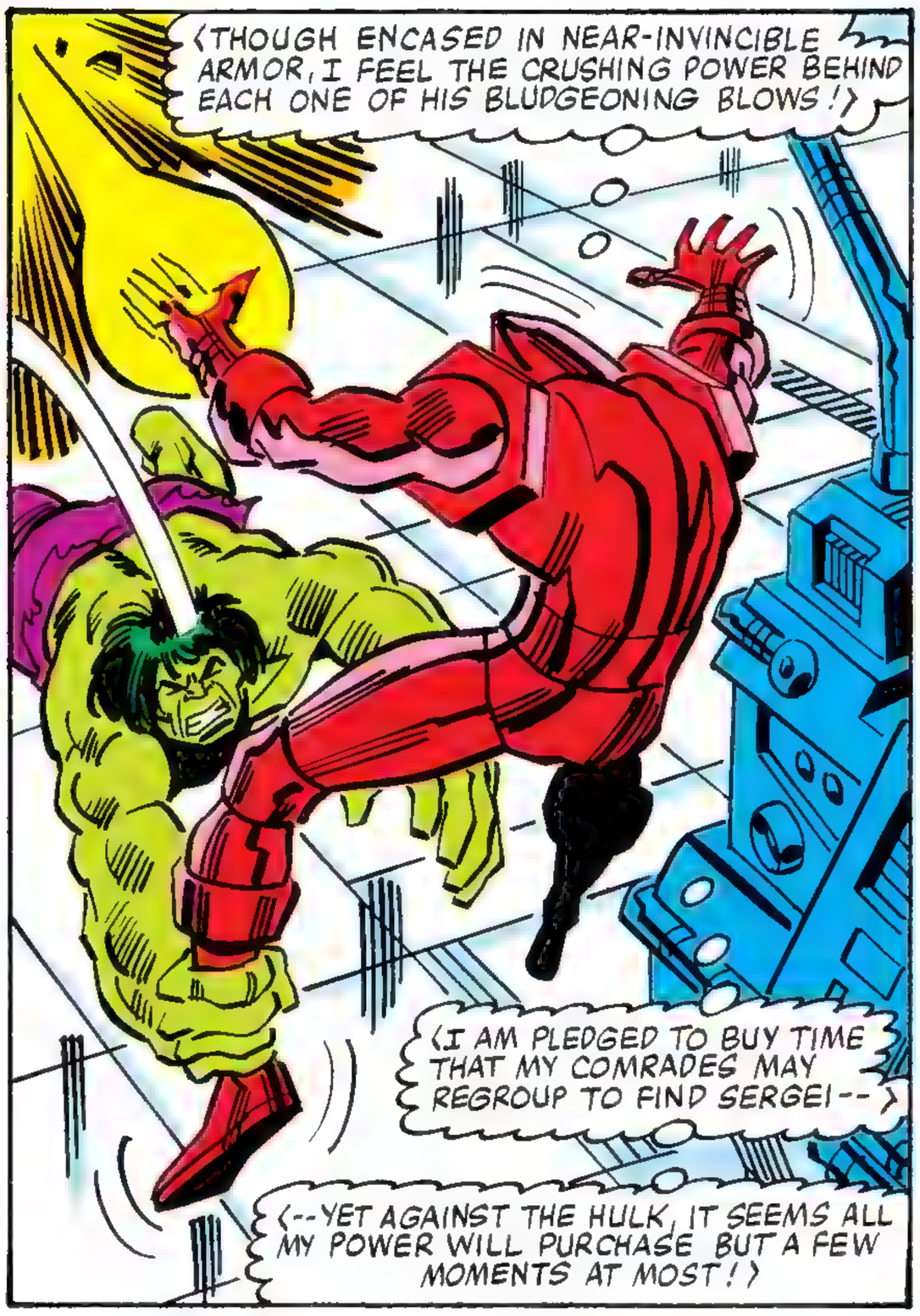
RELUCTANTLY, URSA MAJOR OBEYS HIS COMRADE...

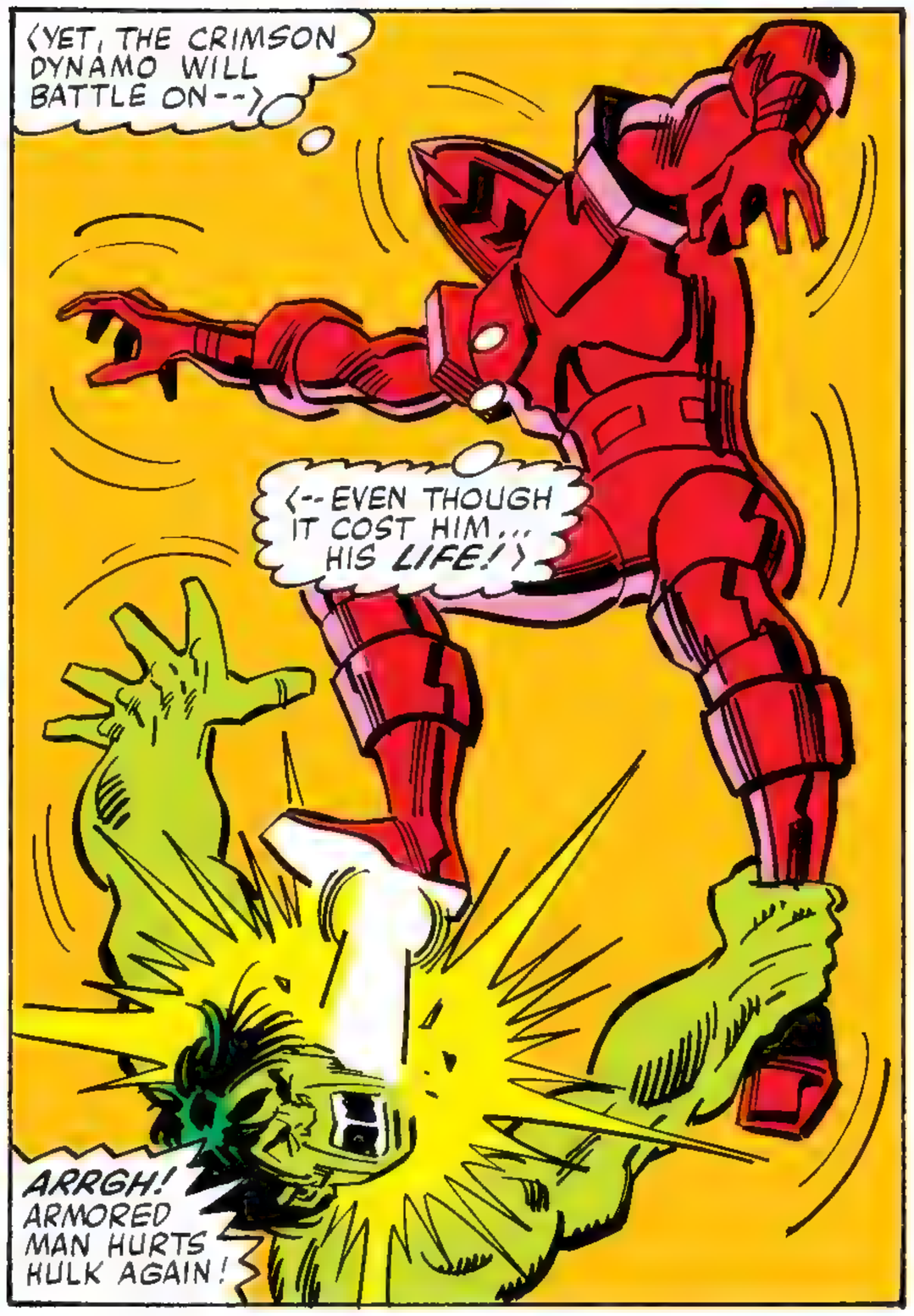
...AND THE CRIMSON DYNAMO RISES TO RENEW HIS BATTLE WITH THE HULK!

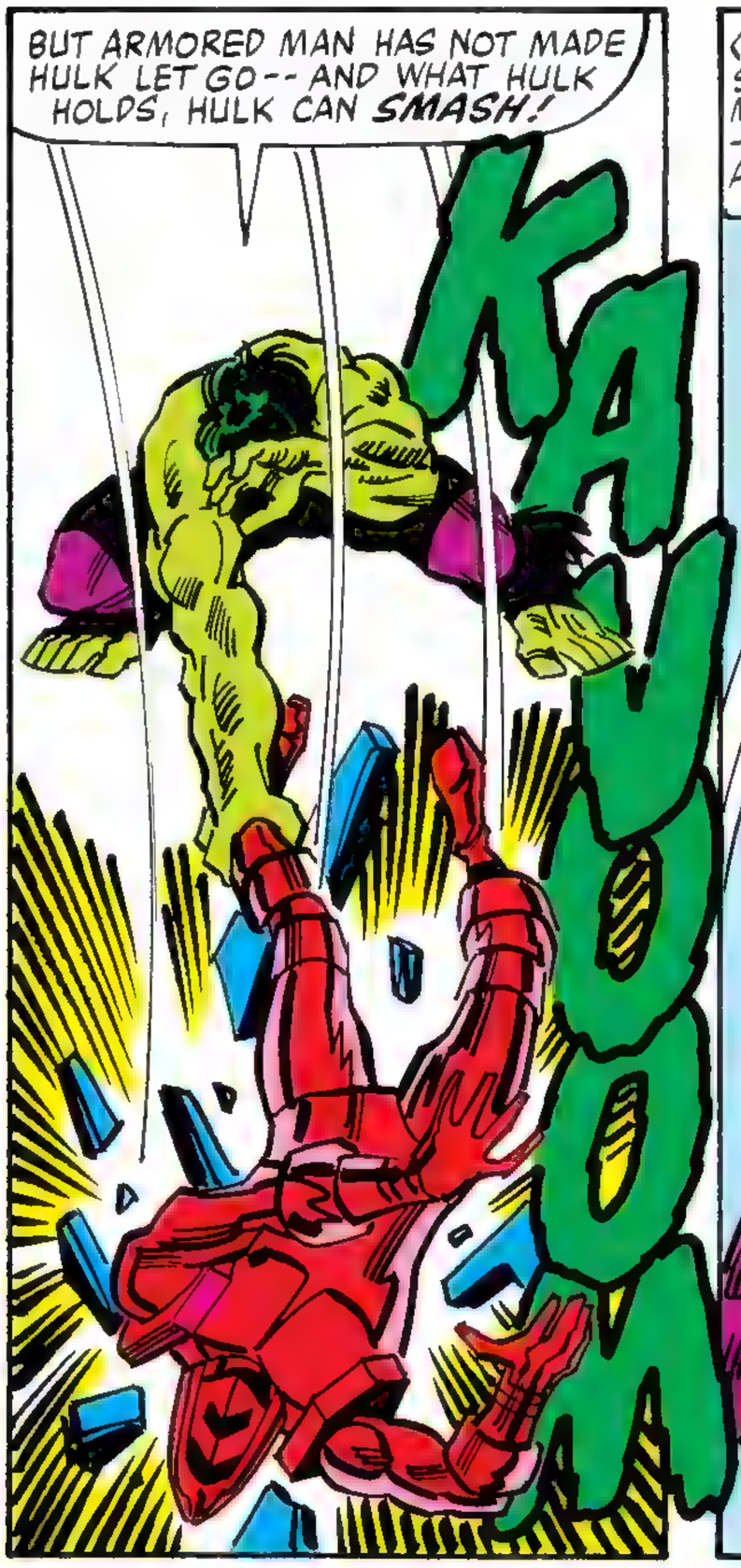
GRARR! ARMORED MAN SHOOTS RAY AT HULK?!

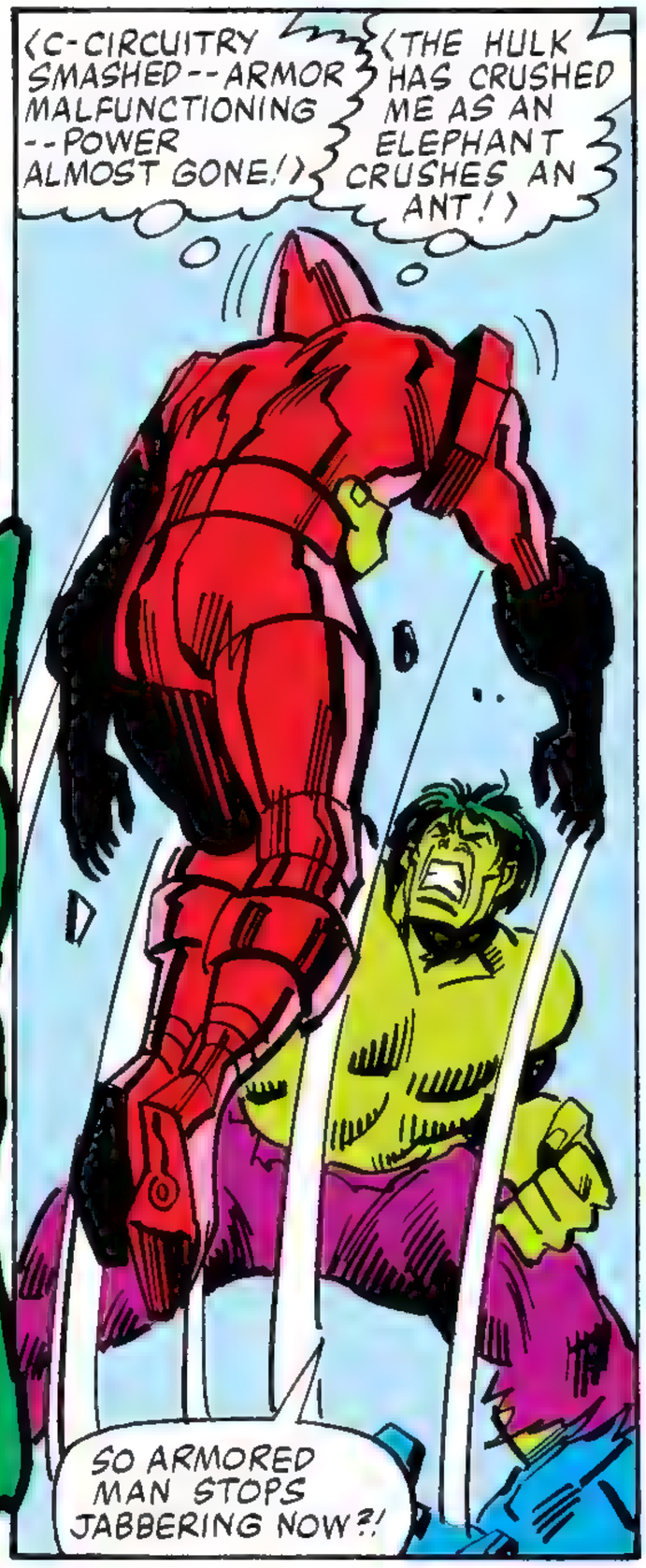
RAY HURTS--BUT HULK HAS FOUGHT ANOTHER... *IRON MAN*... AND HULK HAS SMASHED HIM LIKE HULK WILL SMASH YOU!

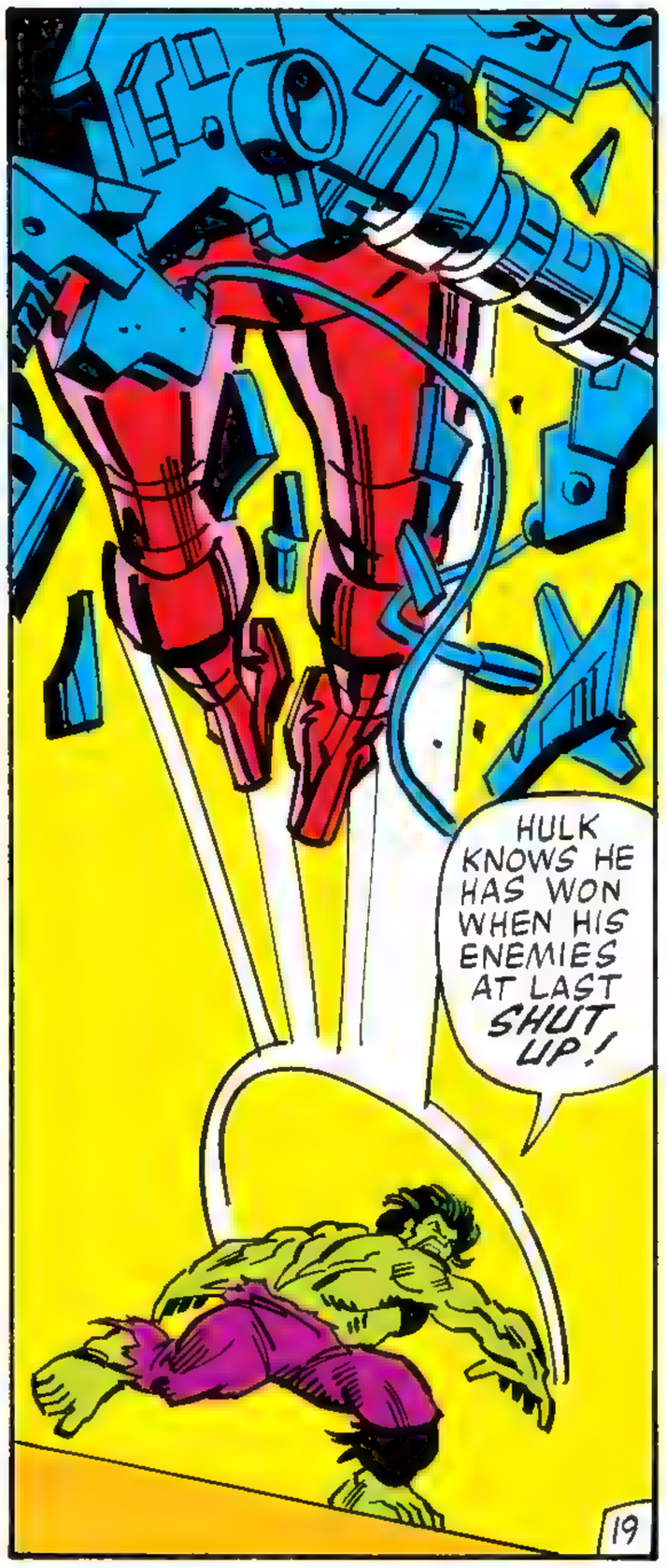
<HE--HE DEFIES MY ELECTROTHRUST BEAM!>


(THOUGH ENCASED IN NEAR-INVINCIBLE ARMOR, I FEEL THE CRUSHING POWER BEHIND EACH ONE OF HIS BLUDGEONING BLOWS!)
(I AM PLEDGED TO BUY TIME THAT MY COMRADES MAY REGROUP TO FIND SERGEI--)
(--YET AGAINST THE HULK, IT SEEMS ALL MY POWER WILL PURCHASE BUT A FEW MOMENTS AT MOST!)


(YET, THE CRIMSON DYNAMO WILL BATTLE ON--)
(--EVEN THOUGH IT COST HIM... HIS LIFE!)
ARRGH! ARMORED MAN HURTS HULK AGAIN!


BUT ARMORED MAN HAS NOT MADE HULK LET GO -- AND WHAT HULK HOLDS, HULK CAN SMASH!
KA
BOOM


(C-CIRCUITRY SMASHED -- ARMOR MALFUNCTIONING -- POWER ALMOST GONE!)
(THE HULK HAS CRUSHED ME AS AN ELEPHANT CRUSHES AN ANT!)
SO ARMORED MAN STOPS JABBERING NOW?!


HULK KNOWS HE HAS WON WHEN HIS ENEMIES AT LAST SHUT UP!
19

HOWEVER...

〈VANGUARD IS GONE -- DARK-STAR AND THE DYNAMO ARE DEFEATED--!〉

〈I KNOW WELL THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR MISSION -- BUT I CANNOT ALLOW MY COMRADES TO GO UNAVENGED!〉

HULK HAS BEATEN GIRL AND ARMORED MAN! HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

〈YOUR ACTIONS EXPLAIN YOUR WORDS, GREENSKIN! BUT, BEFORE YOU PROCLAIM A VICTORY OVER THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS--〉

〈--YOU MUST FIRST ANSWER TO... URSA MAJOR!〉

HUNH?! HAIRY MAN LEAPS AT HULK FROM BEHIND-- TRIES TO DRIVE HULK DOWN TO THE FLOOR!

FTAK!

NO ONE PUSHES HULK DOWN, HAIRY MAN! **NO ONE!**

〈POWER OF THE PROLETARIAT, THE HULK IS HALF MY SIZE-- BUT MORE THAN TEN TIMES AS STRONG! WHAT COULD CREATE SUCH A CREATURE?!〉

〈THE HULK SEEMS MADDER-- **STRONGER** THAN EVER...〉

〈...WHILE, WITHOUT DARK-STAR'S PROTECTION, THE FORBIDDEN ZONE'S RADIATION SAPS EVEN MY ENORMOUS STRENGTH!〉

THUS, ENGROSSED IN AN UNEQUAL STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL, THE RUSSIAN MAN-BEAR DOES NOT SEE A SILENT SHAPE STEP FROM THE SHADOWS NEAR THE DEFENSELESS DARK-STAR!

〈URSA MAJOR FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE -- BUT I RISK *ALL* IF I MAKE HIM AWARE OF MY PRESENCE NOW!〉

〈LET HIM JOIN US -- *IF* HE LIVES!〉

〈-- IF NOT, THE BATTLE WILL HAVE TO BE CARRIED BY VANGUARD, DARKSTAR --〉

〈-- AND MYSELF!〉

DARKSTAR IN HIS ARMS, THE COWLED ENIGMA ESCAPES!

〈DARKSTAR -- *GONE!* IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, I FORGOT TO GUARD HER!〉

〈-- MUST SUMMON ALL MY STRENGTH --!〉

SO HAIRY MAN IS STRONGER THAN HE PRETENDED!

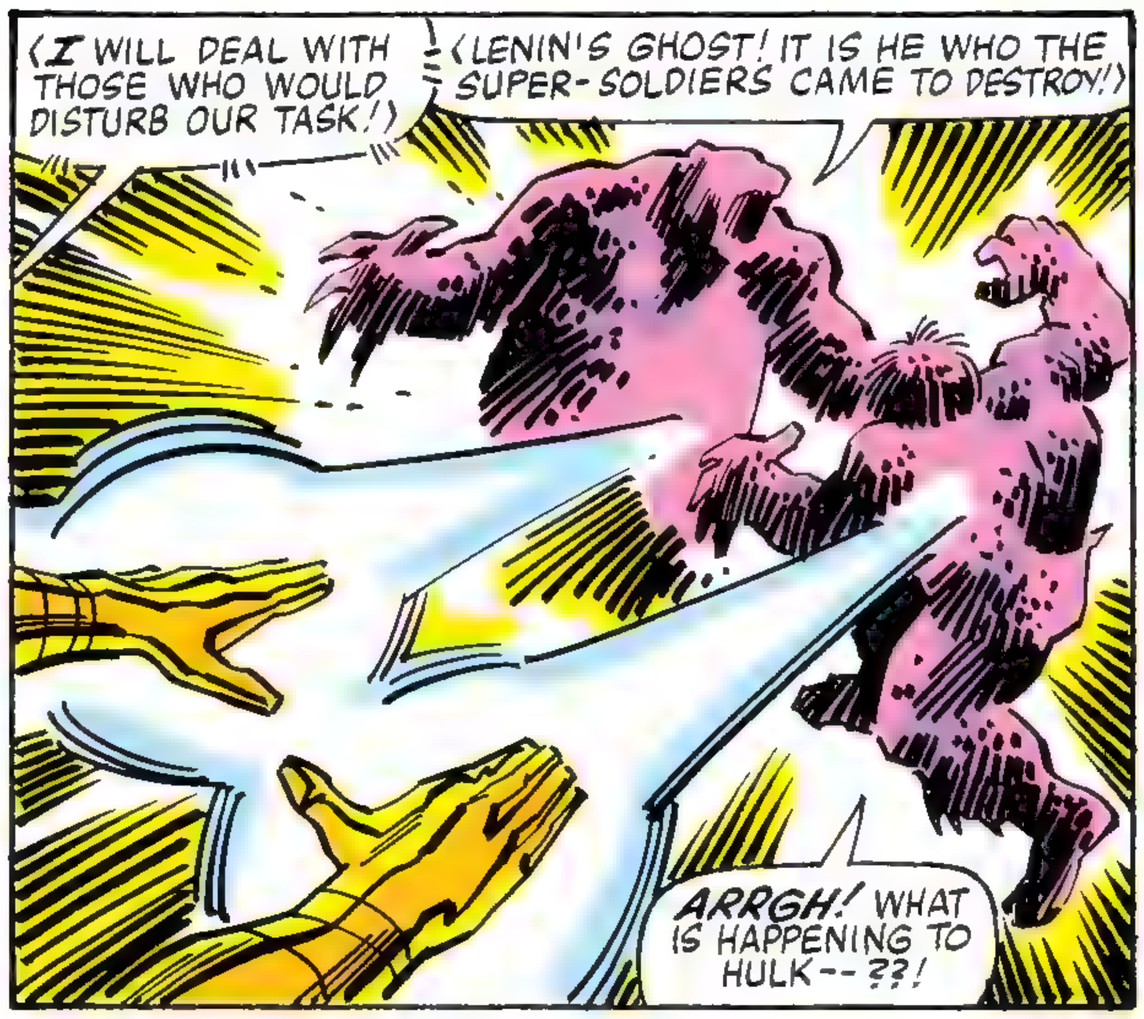
IT DOES NOT MATTER! HULK IS STILL STRONGER!

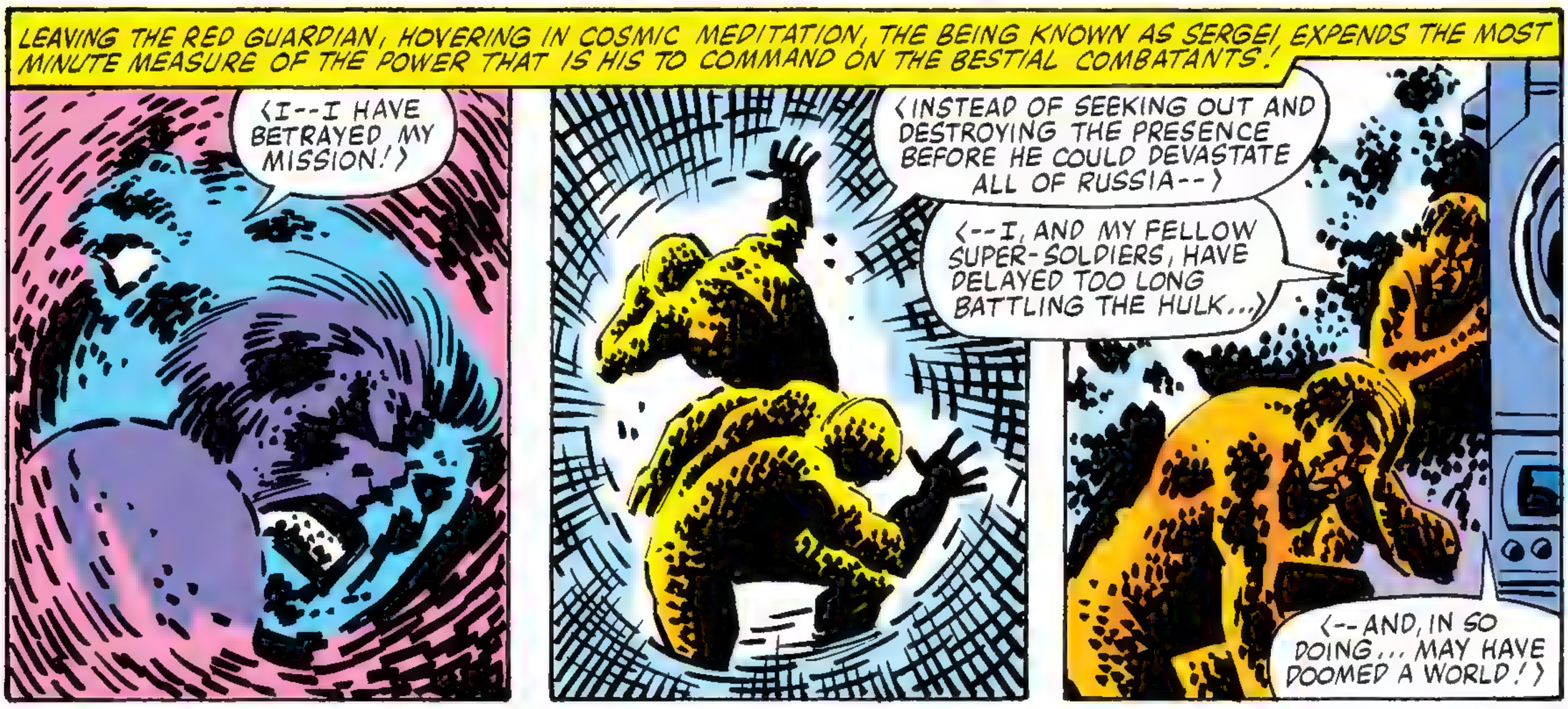
BUT A CLASH OF SUCH CATACLYSMIC PROPORTIONS, WHICH DECIMATES THE GLOWING INSTRUMENTS LINING THE UNEARTHLY LAB...

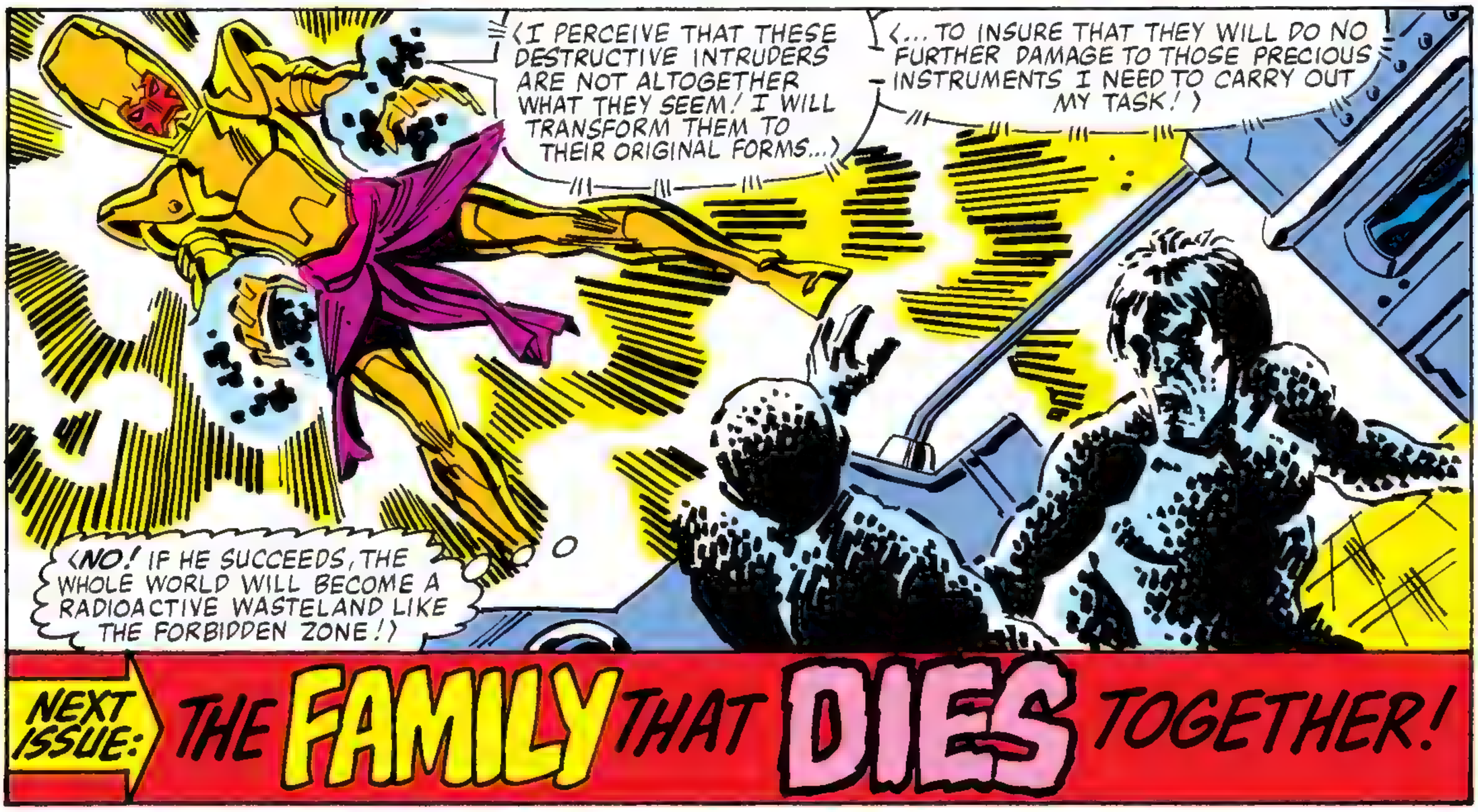
...COULD SCARCE GO UNNOTICED FOR LONG! THUS, THE CREATOR OF -- AND POWER BEHIND -- THE BIZARRE MACHINERY MAKES HIS ENTRANCE!

SERGEI -- THE PRESENCE!

〈WHO DARES TO INTERRUPT OUR COSMIC COMMUNION?!〉




NEXT ISSUE: THE FAMILY THAT DIES TOGETHER!

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THE INCREDIBLE HULK™

THE *HULK* JOINS THE *SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS* TO BATTLE THE SOURCE SINISTER!

broderick & milgrom

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

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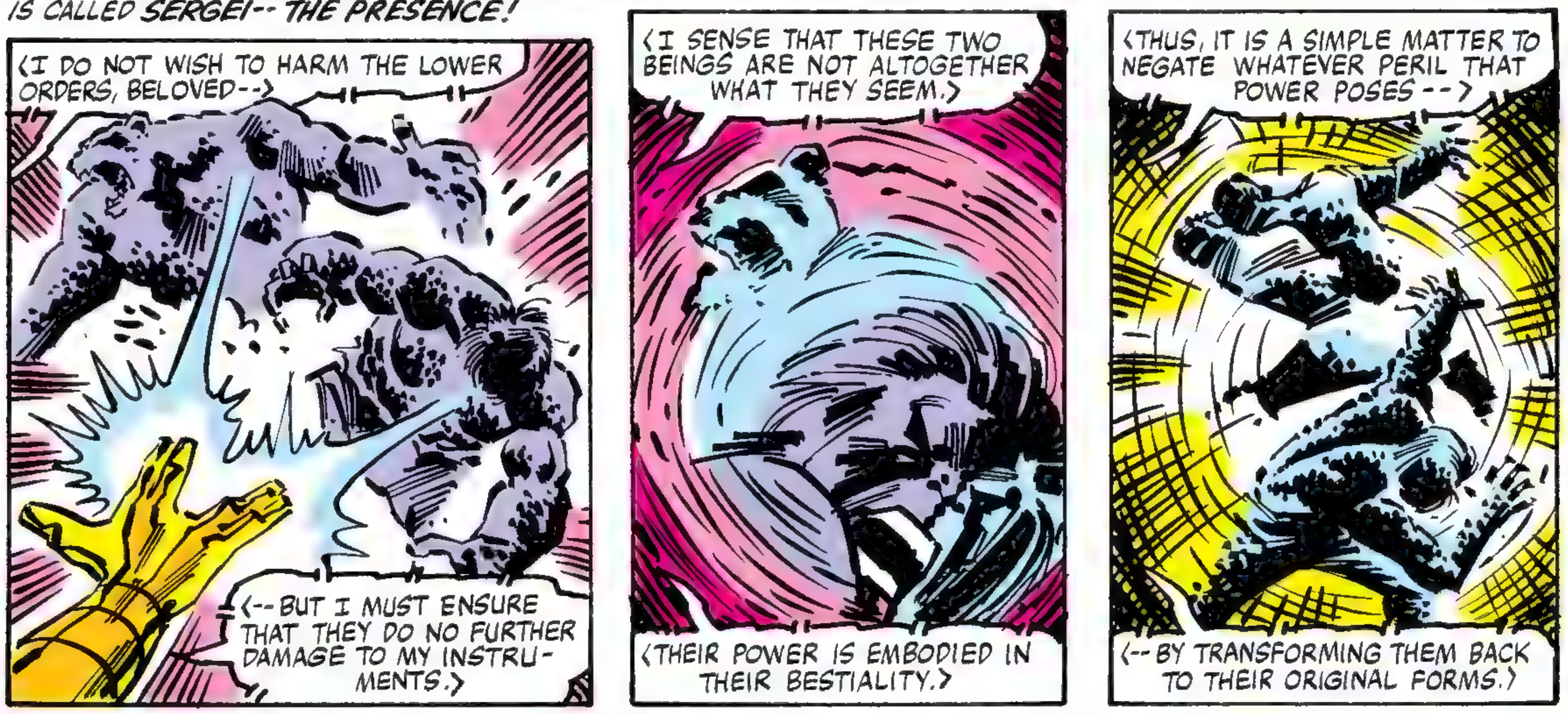
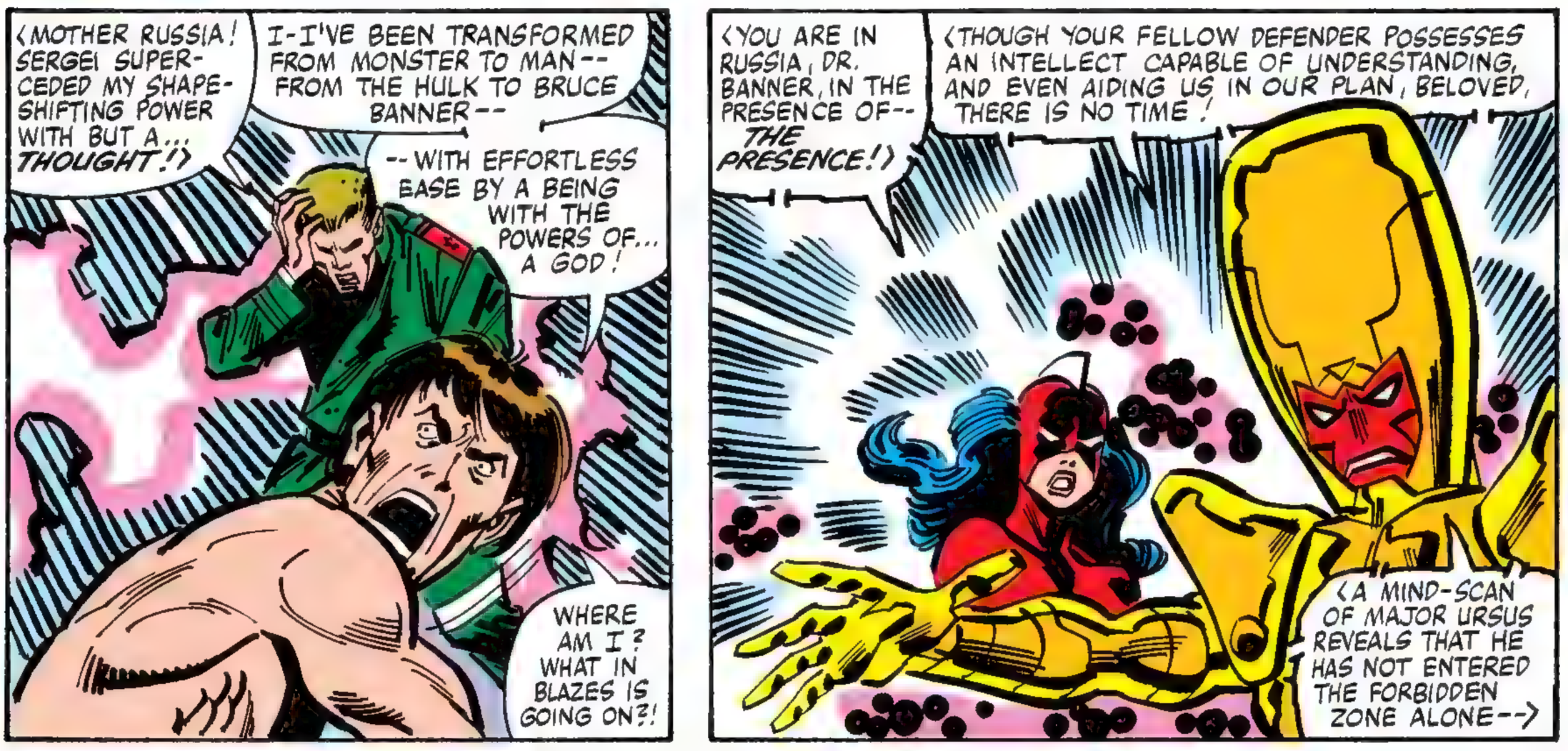
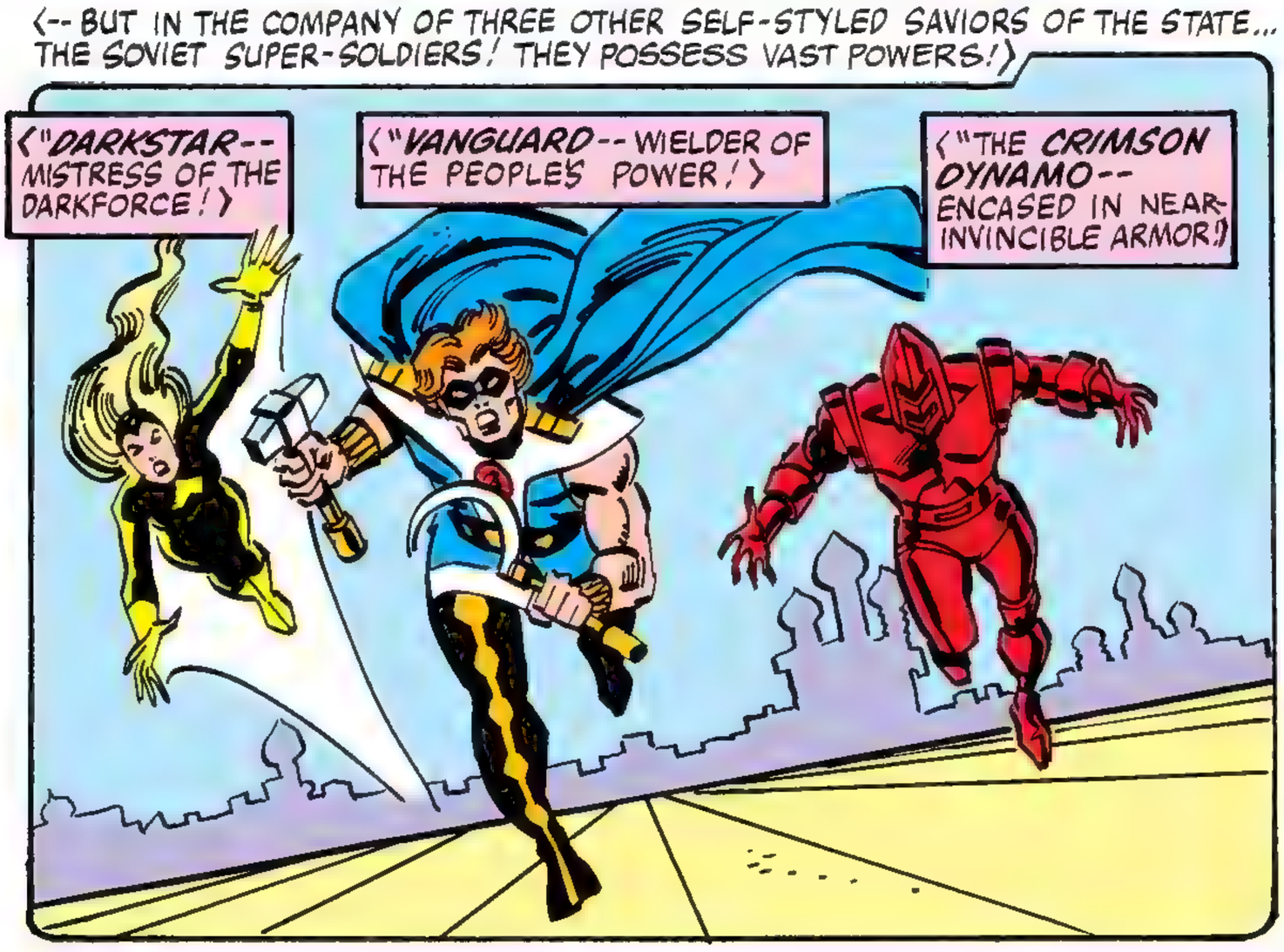
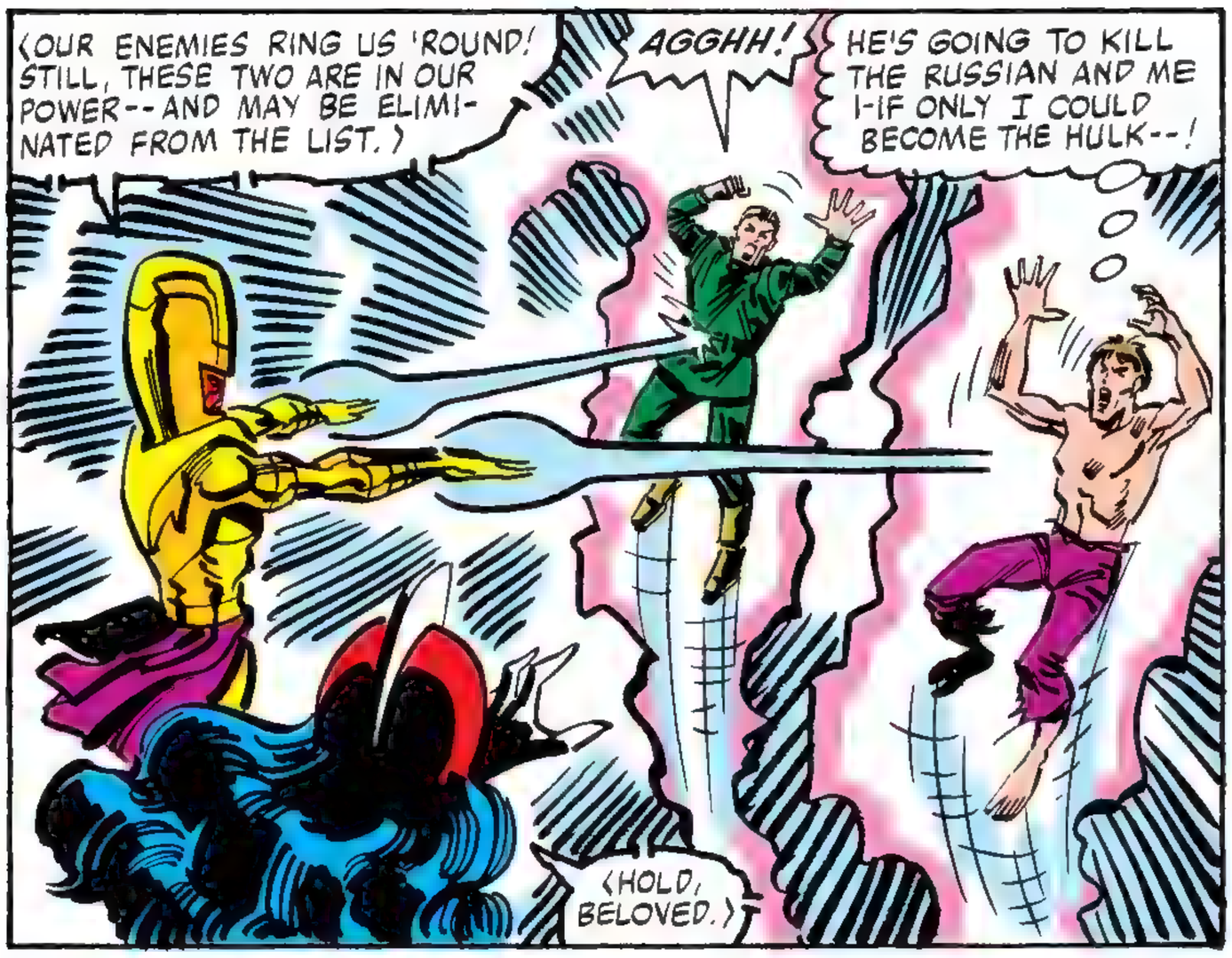
## THE FAMILY THAT DIES TOGETHER...!

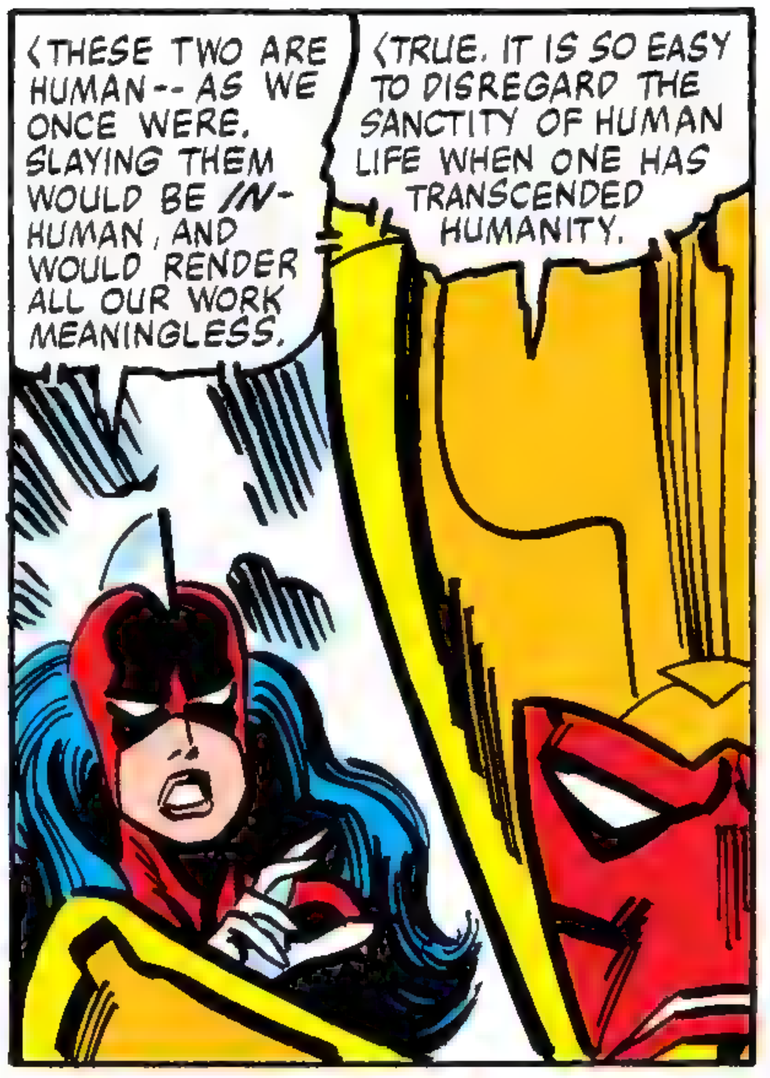
SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED SO FAST! HURLED INTO THE FORBIDDEN ZONE, WHERE IT WAS HOPED HE WOULD PERISH, THE HULK HAS FOUGHT THE SUPER-SOLDIERS TO A STANDSTILL! BUT NOW THEIR BATTLE HAS ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF HIM WHO IS CALLED **SERGEI-- THE PRESENCE!**

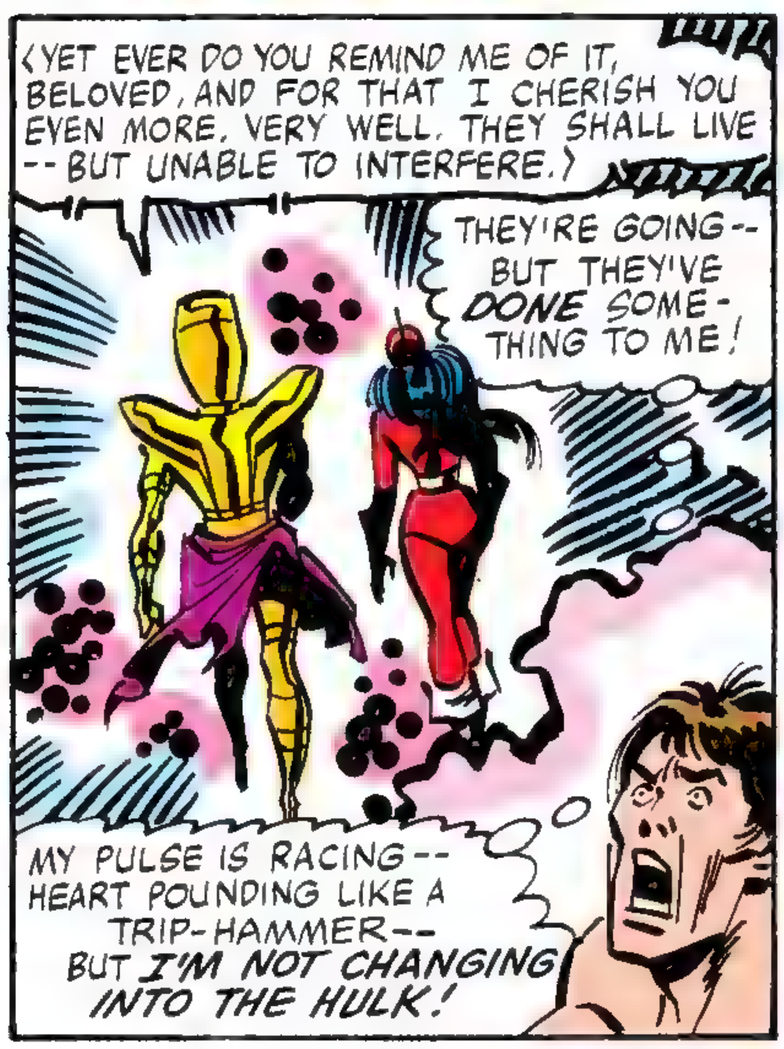


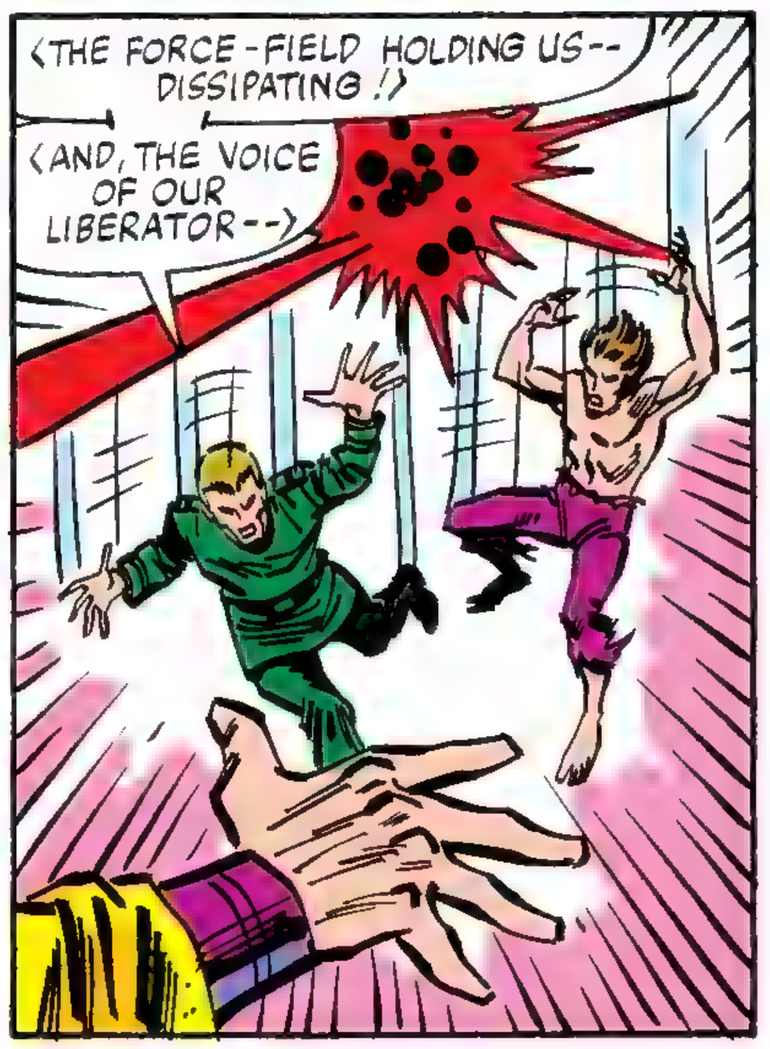



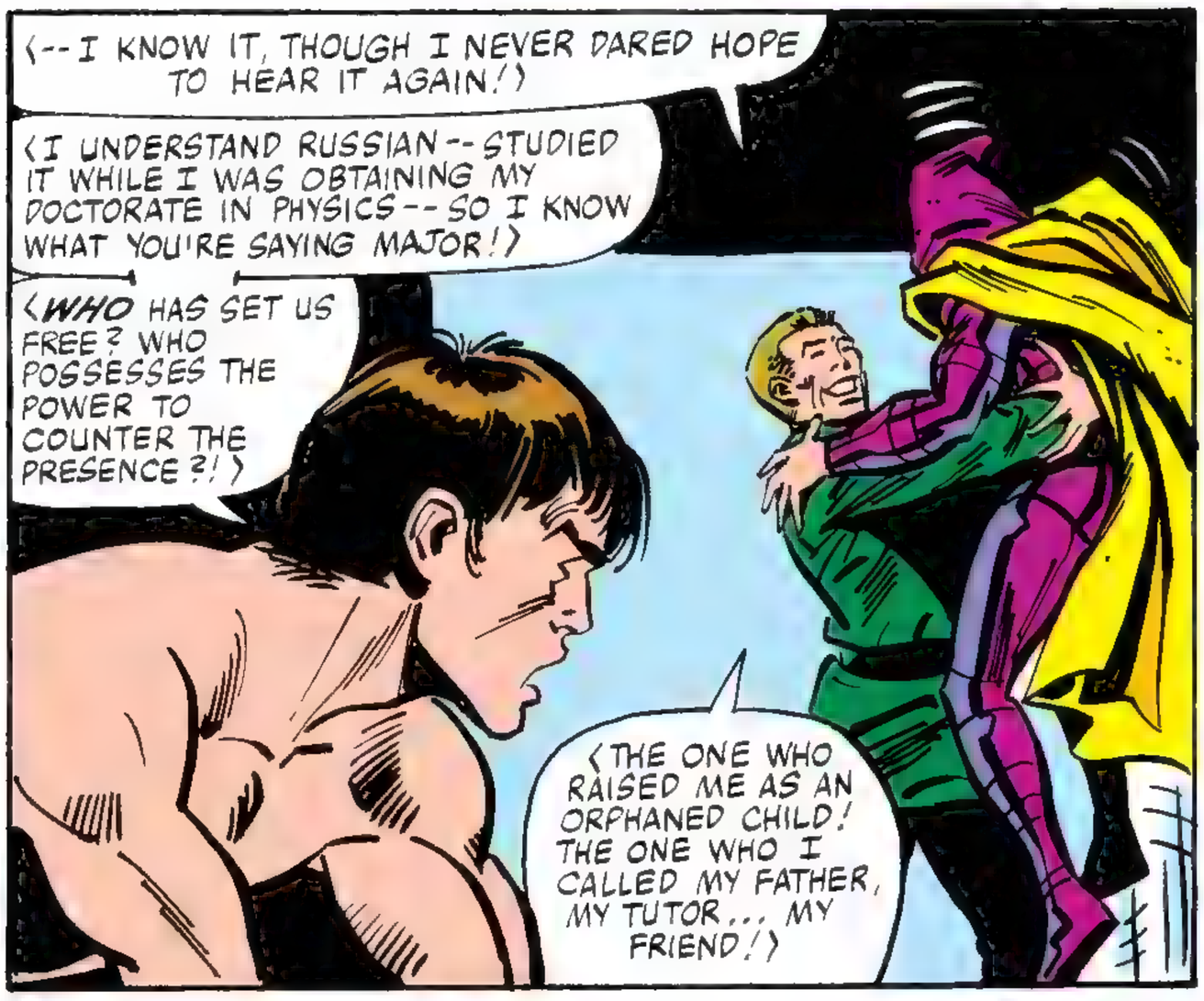

〈OUR ENEMIES RING US 'ROUND! STILL, THESE TWO ARE IN OUR POWER--AND MAY BE ELIMINATED FROM THE LIST.〉
AGGHH!
HE'S GOING TO KILL THE RUSSIAN AND ME I-IF ONLY I COULD BECOME THE HULK--!
〈HOLD, BELOVED.〉

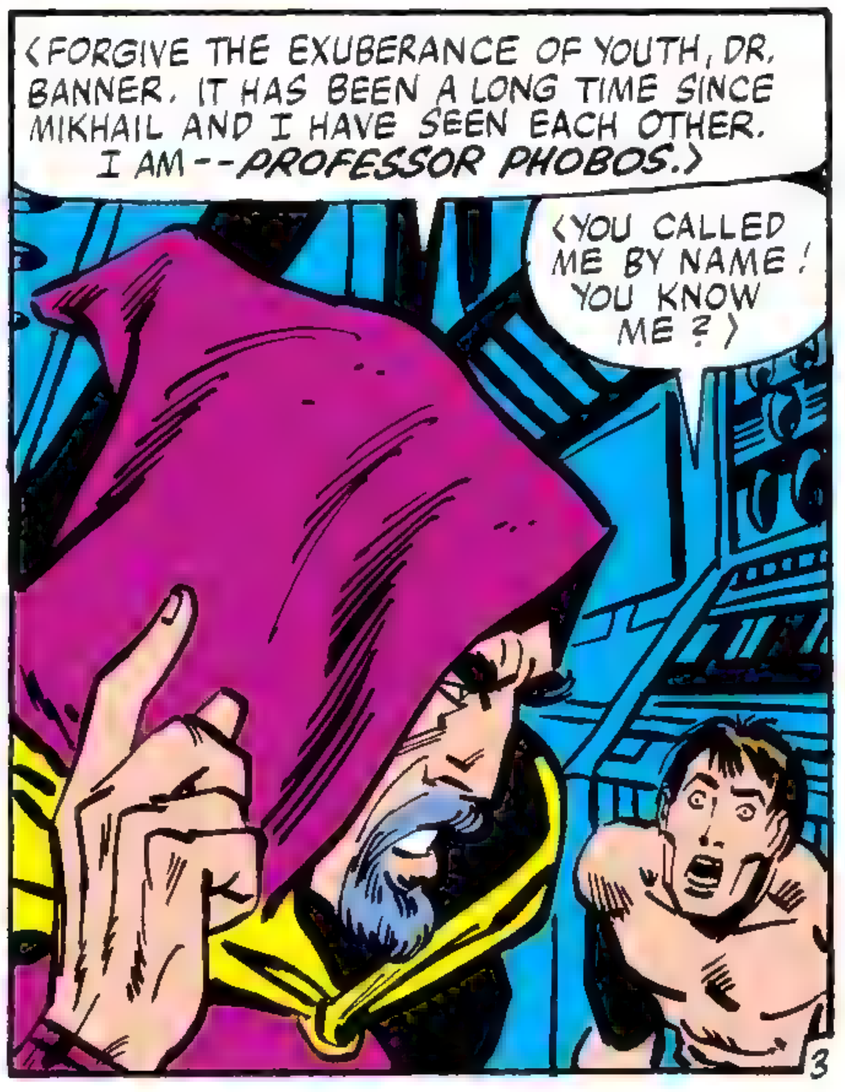

〈THESE TWO ARE HUMAN--AS WE ONCE WERE. SLAYING THEM WOULD BE IN-HUMAN, AND WOULD RENDER ALL OUR WORK MEANINGLESS.
〈TRUE. IT IS SO EASY TO DISREGARD THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE WHEN ONE HAS TRANSCENDED HUMANITY.


〈YET EVER DO YOU REMIND ME OF IT, BELOVED, AND FOR THAT I CHERISH YOU EVEN MORE. VERY WELL. THEY SHALL LIVE --BUT UNABLE TO INTERFERE.〉
THEY'RE GOING--BUT THEY'VE DONE SOMETHING TO ME!
MY PULSE IS RACING--HEART POUNDING LIKE A TRIP-HAMMER--BUT I'M NOT CHANGING INTO THE HULK!

AS SERGEI AND HIS LADY LEAVE THE CHAMBER, A CLOAKED FIGURE STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS AND...
〈BE FREE, PRISONERS OF THE PRESENCE!〉


〈THE FORCE-FIELD HOLDING US--DISSIPATING!〉
〈AND, THE VOICE OF OUR LIBERATOR--〉


〈--I KNOW IT, THOUGH I NEVER DARED HOPE TO HEAR IT AGAIN!〉
〈I UNDERSTAND RUSSIAN--STUDIED IT WHILE I WAS OBTAINING MY DOCTORATE IN PHYSICS--SO I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING MAJOR!〉
〈WHO HAS SET US FREE? WHO POSSESSES THE POWER TO COUNTER THE PRESENCE?!〉
〈THE ONE WHO RAISED ME AS AN ORPHANED CHILD! THE ONE WHO I CALLED MY FATHER, MY TUTOR... MY FRIEND!〉


〈FORGIVE THE EXUBERANCE OF YOUTH, DR. BANNER. IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE MIKHAIL AND I HAVE SEEN EACH OTHER. I AM--PROFESSOR PHOBOS.〉
〈YOU CALLED ME BY NAME! YOU KNOW ME?〉

〈DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON GAMMA RADIATION -- AND THE VICTIM OF AN UNFORTUNATE 'ACCIDENT' THAT TURNED HIM INTO THE MIGHTIEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH? YES, WE HAVE HEARD OF YOU EVEN IN THIS SECRECY-ENSHROUDED LAND.〉

〈I WAS PRIVY TO ALL INFORMATION OF A SCIENTIFIC NATURE PRIOR TO ITS BUTCHERING AT THE HANDS OF THE STATE CENSORS.〉

〈I HAD TO BE, FOR I WAS HEAD OF THE ULTRA-SECRET, SOVIET RESEARCH PROJECT CALLED... THE ***SUPER-SOLDIER SCHOOL.***〉

〈LISTEN, THAT YOU MAY TRUST US FULLY -- FOR WE HAVE NEED OF YOUR HELP!〉

〈"IT BEGAN ONE WINTER'S NIGHT IN MOSCOW, NINETEEN YEARS AGO.〉

〈"A BLACK LADA, TIRES CRUNCHING IN THE SNOW, CAME TO A STOP BEFORE AN UNASSUMING BUILDING ON GORKY STREET.〉

〈"FROM INSIDE STEPPED TWO MEN... BEARING TWO INFANTS.〉

〈" THEY STOOD STIFF, CONTEMPTUOUS, MAKING NO ATTEMPT TO DISGUISE THEIR CONNECTION WITH THE COMMITTEE OF STATE SECURITY -- THE KGB.〉

〈" THOUGH THEY HAD NOT SIGNALLED THEIR PRESENCE, THE DOOR OPENED TO ADMIT THEM.〉

〈DOSVEDANYA, COMRADES. THE TEACHER IS EXPECTING YOU.〉

〈"OUTRAGED AT BEING GREETED BY A SEVEN YEAR OLD BOY WHILE ON A SECRET MISSION OF STATE, THE KGB MEN NEVERTHELESS ACCOMPANIED MIKHAIL URSUS INTO MY PRESENCE.〉

〈GREETINGS, COMRADES. WHAT BRINGS YOU OUT ON SUCH A NIGHT?〉

〈WE HAVE BROUGHT THE CHILDREN.〉

〈ALTHOUGH THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED AS THE DEVILS THEY ARE!〉

〈THESE CHILDREN ARE OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE SOVIET UNION.〉

〈THEY ARE NEVER TO BE HARMED! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?〉

〈NEVER!〉

〈MY MIND! LENIN'S GHOST! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY MIND?!〉

〈MIKHAIL URSUS, SHOW OUR VISITORS OUT.〉

〈DA, COMRADE TEACHER.〉

〈THE BOY, HE CHANGES BEFORE OUR EYES--!〉

〈INTO SOMETHING HORRIBLE! DEMONIC! FLEE! FLEE FOR YOUR LIFE!〉

〈"YOU SEE, DR. BANNER, THESE CHILDREN WERE MUTANTS, NOT THE FIRST TO BE BORN IN RUSSIA...〉

〈"... BUT THE FIRST TO SURVIVE THE STALINIST SUSPICION OF THE SOVIET STATE APPARATUS.〉

〈"RUMORS OF SIMILAR 'GIFTED CHILDREN' BEING BORN IN AMERICA HAD PROMPTED THE AUTHORITIES TO REEVALUATE THEIR POWERFUL PRODIGIES, AND TO TRAIN THEM IN THE SERVICE OF THE STATE. FOR SIXTEEN YEARS, SUCH WAS MY TASK... AND MY TRIUMPH!"〉

〈DOSVEDANYA, TEACHER!〉

〈HAVE YOU COME TO GRADE US?〉

〈WHAT IS IN THE BOX?〉

〈GRADUATION GIFTS, MY CHILDREN -- FOR TODAY YOUR TRAINING IS COMPLETE.〉

〈NICOLAI KRYLENKO, STEP FORWARD.〉

〈YOUR POWER IS TO TURN AN ENEMY'S MIGHT BACK AGAINST HIM.〉

〈THESE SYMBOLS OF THE STATE WILL HELP YOU *FOCUS* THAT POWER... AS *VANGUARD!*

〈LAYNIA PETROVNA, THE DARKFORCE YOU POSSESS IS SOME ALIEN MANIFESTATION OF YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS.〉

〈WITH THIS *DARKSTAR*, YOU CAN CONTROL IT!〉

〈I SEE NO GIFT FOR ME, TEACHER.〉

〈YOUR SHAPE-CHANGING POWER IS COMPLETE UNTO ITSELF, MIKHAIL URSUS.〉

〈AS THE OLDEST, I GIVE YOU -- *URSA MAJOR* -- THE GIFT OF LEADERSHIP...〉

〈... FOR I MUST GO AWAY!〉

〈"THAT NIGHT, I FLED MY SCHOOL, BURNING ALL MY NOTES -- ALL MY OBSERVATIONS ABOUT MY 'GIFTED STUDENTS' -- AND VANISHED INTO THE FROZEN WASTES OF SIBERIA."〉

〈BUT WHY DID YOU FLEE, ABANDONING US AS OUR REAL PARENTS HAD DONE, SO MANY YEARS BEFORE?〉

〈THE REINS OF STATE POWER HAD CHANGED HANDS, DARKSTAR. MUTANTS WERE FEARED--〉

〈-- BUT MORE FEARED WAS THE MAN WHO *CONTROLLED* THEM!〉

〈THEY WOULD HAVE KILLED ME--OR WORSE, FORCED ME TO MANIPULATE *YOU* TO DO THEIR WILL. I WOULD NOT BETRAY YOUR TRUST IN ME THAT WAY. IN HIDING, I LEARNED THAT AT FIRST THEY THOUGHT TO SLAY YOU.〉

〈INSTEAD, THEY SPLIT YOU UP -- DRAFTING VANGUARD AND URSA MAJOR...〉

〈...AND SENDING DARKSTAR TO AMERICA UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF THE CRIMSON DYNAMO. NOW THEY HAVE SEEN FIT TO ALLOW YOU TO REGROUP--〉

〈-- TO FIGHT A MENACE THEY REGARD AS MORE OF A THREAT THAN MUTANTKIND... THE *FORBIDDEN ZONE!*〉

〈BUT THE FORBIDDEN ZONE WAS A CONTAINED AREA--!〉

〈NO LONGER, DR. BANNER. SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN HAVE BEEN TRYING TO SPREAD IT IN AN INEXORABLE RADIOACTIVE WAVE OVER THE ENTIRE SOVIET UNION--〉

〈-- IN THE HOPE THAT THOSE TOUCHED BY THE CONTAMINATION WILL EITHER DIE, OR MUTATE INTO BEINGS LIKE THEM-SELVES.〉

〈MADNESS! DOES SERGEI POSSESS THE POWER--?〉

〈TO MAKE MEN INTO MONSTERS, DR. BANNER? DID HE NOT MAKE YOU AND URSA MAJOR...*MEN*?〉

〈YES! NOW-- WHEN I WISH I *COULD* BECOME THE HULK TO STOP HIM -- HE'S CURED ME, MADE ME A NORMAL MAN AGAIN... HELPLESS TO INTERFERE!〉

〈AND THE RED GUARDIAN -- WHO WAS ONCE A DEFENDER -- IS HELPING HIM! I-I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!〉

〈SHE CAN NO LONGER BE CONSIDERED *HUMAN* DOCTOR SHE IS ONE WITH SERGE.

〈NOW WE MUST ACT. IN MY SELF-IMPOSED EXILE, I HAVE LEARNED MUCH ABOUT SERGEI. I BELIEVE I KNOW HOW TO STOP HIM. BUT FIRST WE MUST TEND TO THE FALLEN CRIMSON DYNAMO.〉

〈I'M AFRAID I DID THAT TO HIM... AS THE HULK!〉

〈THE DARKFORCE WILL SPIRIT HIM FROM THIS TROUBLED CLIME -->

〈"-- TO DISTANT LENINGRAD, WHERE HE MAY RECEIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE MEDICAL CARE!"〉

〈D-DOCTOR!〉

〈I-I SEE IT, NURSE! READY THE EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY!〉

〈THOUGH SERGEI IS A MIGHTY FORCE UNTO HIMSELF, HE STILL NEEDS THESE INFERNAL MACHINES TO PRODUCE AND SPREAD THE RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION.〉

〈I BELIEVE I CAN TURN HIS OWN INSTRUMENTS AGAINST HIM, BUT I MUST HAVE TIME...!〉

〈AND SO YOU SHALL, PROFESSOR--〉

〈--IF WE SUPER-SOLDIERS HAVE TO BUY IT WITH OUR LIVES!〉

〈MY STUDENTS ARE BRAVE, DR. BANNER --BUT ***BRAIN***-POWER IS WHAT IS NEEDED TO STOP SERGEI!〉

〈GOOD HEAVENS! THE INSTRUMENTS --LEVITATING! YOU'RE DOING IT-- WITH YOUR ***MIND!***〉

〈YOU'RE A MUTANT, THEN --LIKE YOUR STUDENTS?〉

〈OF COURSE. WHY ELSE WOULD I HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO HEAD THE SUPER-SOLDIER SCHOOL?〉

〈WHY ELSE WOULD THE VERY STATE I NOW HOPE TO SAVE, FEAR ME AND WISH TO HAVE ME KILLED?〉

〈NOW, DR. BANNER-- WILL YOU ***HELP*** ME TO SAVE MY COUNTRY--〉

〈--AND, PERHAPS, THE WORLD?!〉

*EVEN AS BRUCE BANNER NODS HIS HEAD, A GIGANTIC GOLDEN BATTLE-CRUISER SOARS AGRESSIVELY INTO SOVIET AIRSPACE!*

*IT IS CALLED-- THE **WAR WAGON!***

*ITS PURPOSE: TO TRACK DOWN AND KILL ONE BEING... THE INCREDIBLE **HULK!***

*ALONG ITS GLEAMING DECKS STALKS ONE MAN, OBSESSED WITH HIS MISSION!*

*HE IS **GLENN TALBOT**. OF LATE, FOR STEALING THE WAR WAGON, HIS COUNTRYMEN HAVE BEEN CALLING HIM... TRAITOR!*

I'M OVER THE SOVIET UNION NOW--

--AND THERE'S ***STILL*** NO TRACE OF THE HULK!

ON THE BRIDGE, TALBOT CONSULTS HIS SOLE COMPANION...

STATUS REPORT, 'BRAIN!'

GAMMA TRAIL SEARCH: NEGATIVE. QUARRY HAS DISAPPEARED IN KHYSTYM REGION OF U.S.S.R.

I DETECT AFTERBURNER EMMISSIONS.

AFTERBURNERS! THE COMMIES HAVE SENT UP *JETS!*

(GAMMA WING TO GROUND CONTROL --WE ARE AIRBORNE!)

(GROUND CONTROL TO GAMMA WING-- INTRUDER IS FLYING BELOW RADAR COVER!)

(IT IS *BIG*, COMRADES!)

(DA! WE HAVE ESTABLISHED VISUAL CONTACT, GROUND CONTROL! FIRING INTERCEPTORS!)

FHROOSH

FRWOOSH

PURSUIT PLANES HAVE COMMENCED ATTACK.

ACTIVATE HYPERSONIC SHIELDS.

PITCHED TOO HIGH FOR THE UNAIDED HUMAN EAR TO HEAR, A PULSATING SERIES OF SONIC WAVES IS EMITTED BY THE WAR WAGON'S SOUND CANNONS.

CAREFULLY MODULATED SOUNDWAVES SHATTER THE SOVIET PURSUIT PLANES, WHILE ALLOWING THE PILOTS TO BAIL OUT TO SAFETY!

I MONITOR NO FURTHER ATTACKS. THE RUSSIANS SEEM TO FEAR THE AREA WE NOW ENTER.

FEAR IT? WHY?

RADIATION.

THEN THAT MUST BE WHAT'S MASKING THE HULK'S GAMMA TRAIL! KEEP SEARCHING, BRAIN!

FAR BELOW, IN THE HEART OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE, THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS MOUNT A RACE AGAINST TIME...

〈THIS COMPLEX IS SO VAST!〉

〈ONLY YOUR DARKFORCE SHIELDS US FROM THE INCREDIBLY HIGH LEVELS OF RADIATION, DARKSTAR!〉

〈WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY COMRADES WHEN WE FIND SERGEI?〉

〈FEAR NOT, MIKHAIL! SERGEI DID NOT WIPE OUT YOUR MUTANT ABILITIES... HE MERELY SWITCHED OFF THAT SECTOR OF YOUR BRAIN WHICH CONTROLLED THEM.〉

〈DEFEAT HIM, AND YOU WILL BE WHOLE ONCE MORE.〉

〈I WILL, PROFESSOR --I MUST!〉

〈MY POWER IS MY LIFE!〉

〈COMRADES! AHEAD-- THE ENEMY!〉

〈SERGEI!〉

〈THE PRESENCE!〉

SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN HOVER IN COSMIC COMMUNION, HIGH ABOVE THE FLOOR OF A CHAMBER WHICH ONCE CONTAINED THE POWER-CORE OF THE VAST COMPLEX COMPRISING THE FORBIDDEN ZONE.

〈THEY PAY NO ATTENTION TO US!〉

〈WE ARE INSECTS TO THEM --UNWORTHY OF THE ATTENTION OF GODS!〉

〈VANGUARD IS NO INSECT, DARKSTAR! HE IS A SOLDIER OF THE STATE!〉

〈STILL, NICOLAI? EVEN AFTER WHAT OUR TEACHER SAID--〉

〈--ABOUT HOW THE STATE FEARS AND HATES OUR POWERS!〉

THE GIRL'S QUESTION PLAGUES VANGUARD, BUT DOES NOT STAY HIS ARM...

D..

BUT THE SLIGHTEST GESTURE BY SERGEI DEFLECTS THE SICKLE, CAUSING ITS RAZOR-SHARP BLADE TO SLICE A SWATH THROUGH THE BANKS OF COMPUTER COLUMNS INSTEAD OF THROUGH SERGEI HIMSELF!

〈HOW CAN WE FIGHT THEM, DARKSTAR? THEY POSSESS SO MUCH POWER!〉

〈AGAIN, BELOVED, WE ARE BESET BY FOOLS!〉

〈MUST I BE MERCIFUL, WHEN THEIR ACTIONS ENDANGER THE CRITICAL MOMENT OF OUR ENDEAVORS?〉

〈STOP THEM IF YOU MUST, SERGEI--〉

〈--BUT, FOR MY SAKE, DO NOT *HURT* THEM!〉

〈HAVE NO FEAR ON THAT SCORE, WOMAN! VANGUARD'S POWER, FOCUSED THROUGH THESE OVERLAPPING SYMBOLS OF THE WORKERS' STATE, TURNS THE AGGRESSIVE MIGHT OF AN ENEMY--〉

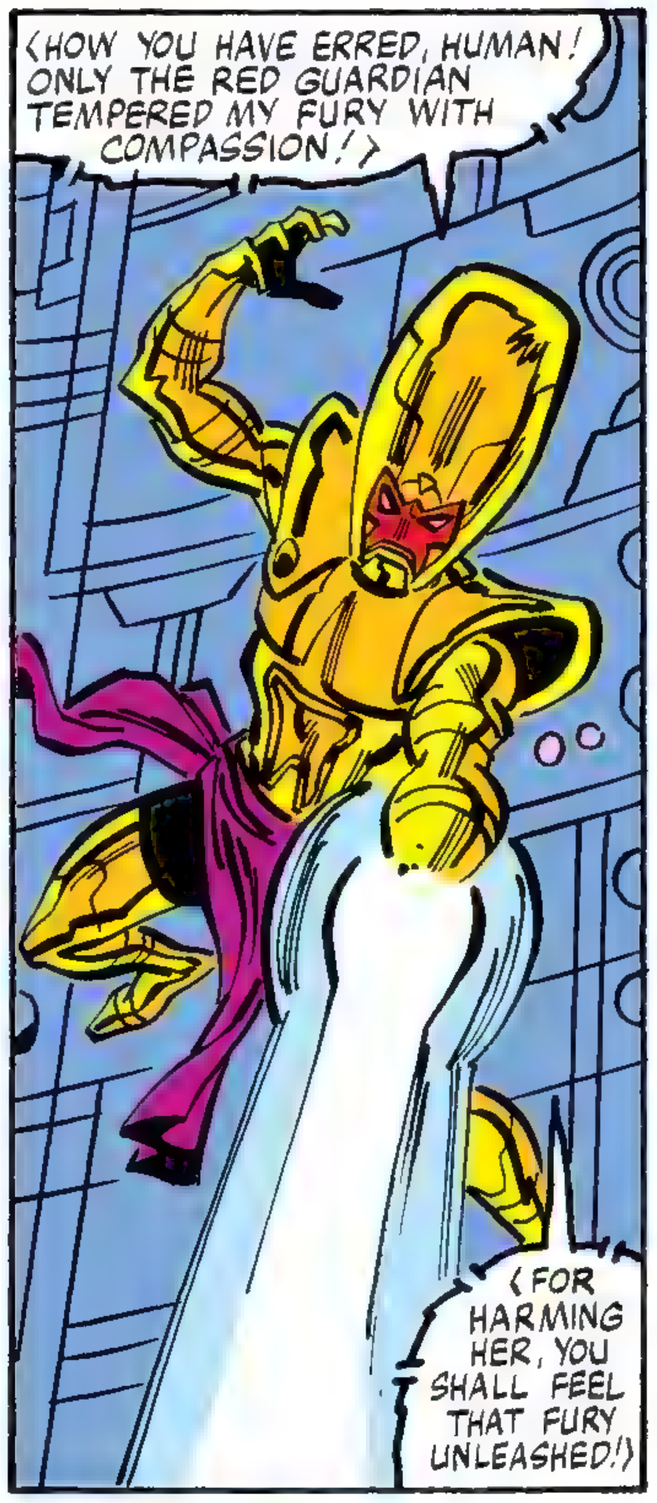
〈--BACK UPON HIM!〉

〈THE GNAT STEALS MY STING!〉

ZZ

〈DA! BUT I POSSESS STINGS OF MY OWN, AS WELL, SERGEI!〉
〈WEAPONS WHICH, ATTUNED TO THEIR MASTER'S MIND--ALIVE IN THEIR MASTER'S HANDS--〉

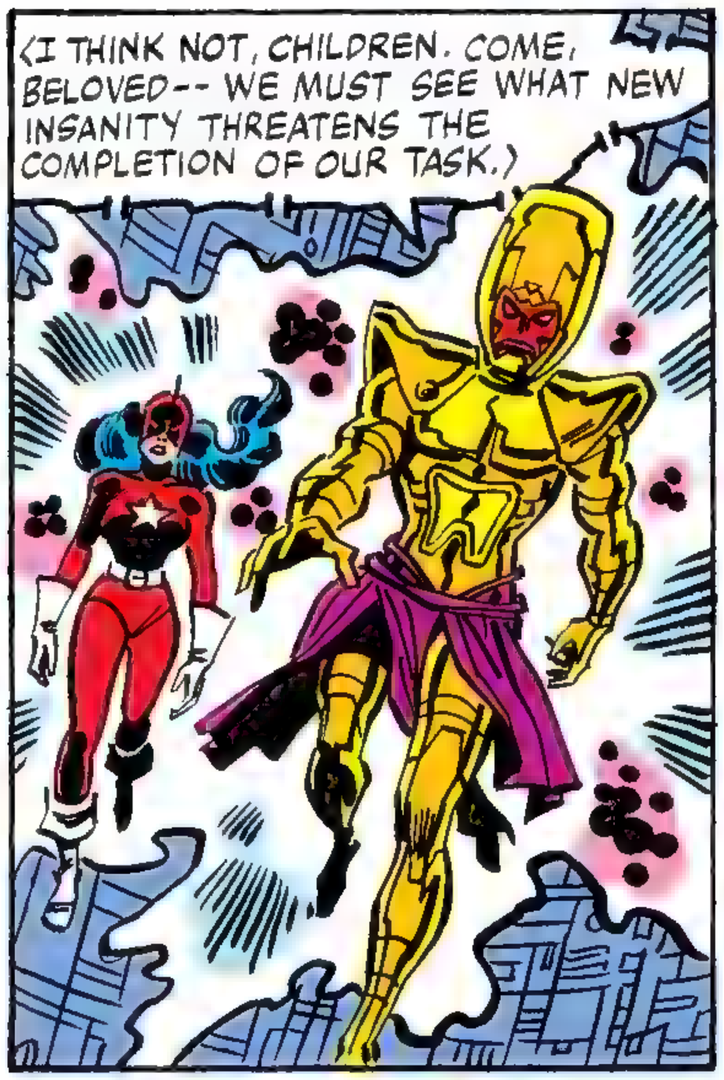
〈--EVEN NOW ENCIRCLE YOUR WOMAN AND HURL HER INFERNAL FORCE-BOLTS BACK UPON HER!〉


〈HOW YOU HAVE ERRED, HUMAN! ONLY THE RED GUARDIAN TEMPERED MY FURY WITH COMPASSION!〉
〈FOR HARMING HER, YOU SHALL FEEL THAT FURY UNLEASHED!〉

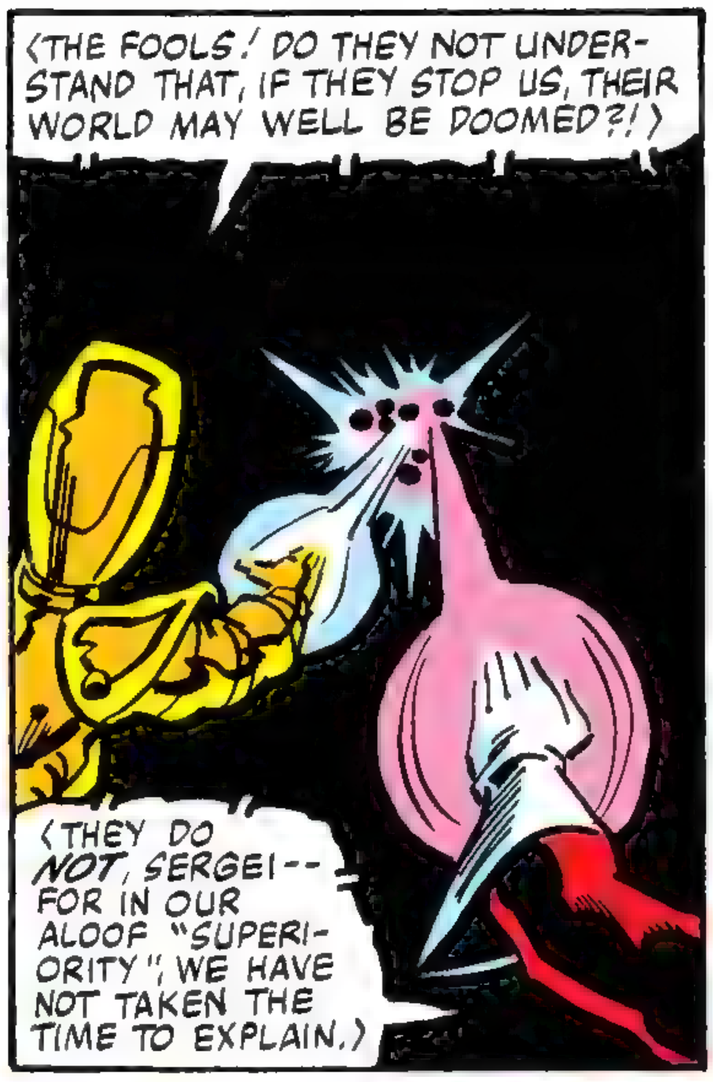

〈WITHOUT HIS HAMMER AND SICKLE, VANGUARD IS DEFENSELESS! I MUST ACT!〉
〈MIKHAIL, NO! GO BACK! UNABLE TO CHANGE YOUR SHAPE, YOU ARE POWERLESS!〉
〈WE WERE BROUGHT UP AS BROTHERS, NICOLAI! I CANNOT DESERT YOU!〉

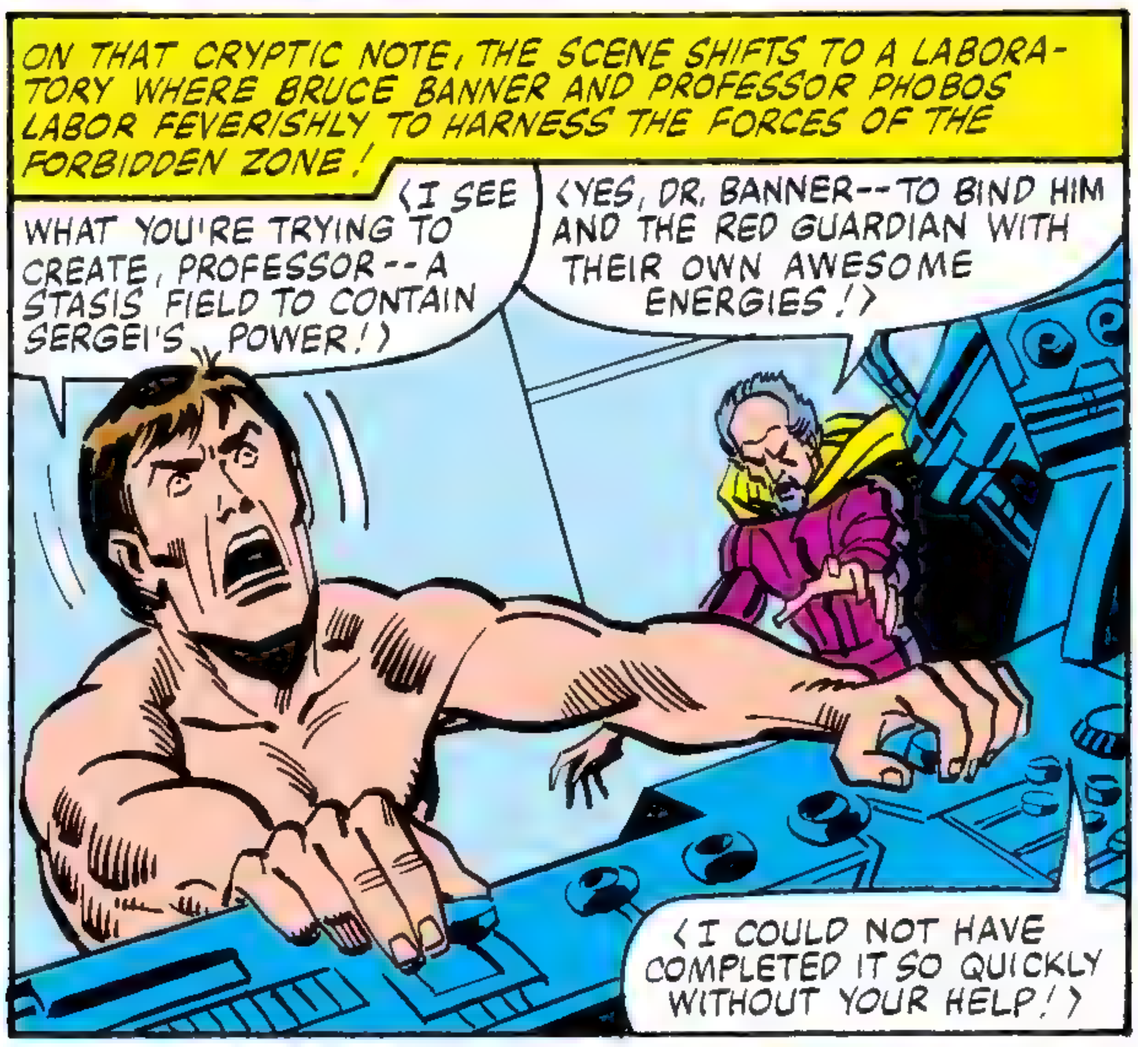
〈THE SHAPE-SHIFTER! IF HE IS FREE FROM MY ENERGY COCCOON, THEN THE LABORATORY IN WHICH I LEFT HIM MAY WELL BE IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO WOULD OPPOSE US!〉

〈COMRADES! WE ARE UNDONE! SERGEI REALIZES THAT OUR PURPOSE IS SOLELY TO HOLD HIM HERE!〉
〈AND SO WE SHALL, DARKSTAR--YOU WITH YOUR DARKFORCE, AND I WITH MY CYBERNETIC WEAPONS WHICH EVEN NOW RETURN TO MY WAITING HANDS!〉


(I THINK NOT, CHILDREN. COME, BELOVED-- WE MUST SEE WHAT NEW INSANITY THREATENS THE COMPLETION OF OUR TASK.)

(EH? A DARKNESS-- DEEPER THAN NIGHT-- EXTENDING ACROSS OUR PATH?!)
(IT CHILLS MY SOUL--AND PREVENTS OUR ATOMS FROM PASSING THROUGH IT!)


(THE FOOLS! DO THEY NOT UNDERSTAND THAT, IF THEY STOP US, THEIR WORLD MAY WELL BE DOOMED?!)
(THEY DO NOT, SERGEI-- FOR IN OUR ALOOF "SUPERIORITY", WE HAVE NOT TAKEN THE TIME TO EXPLAIN.)

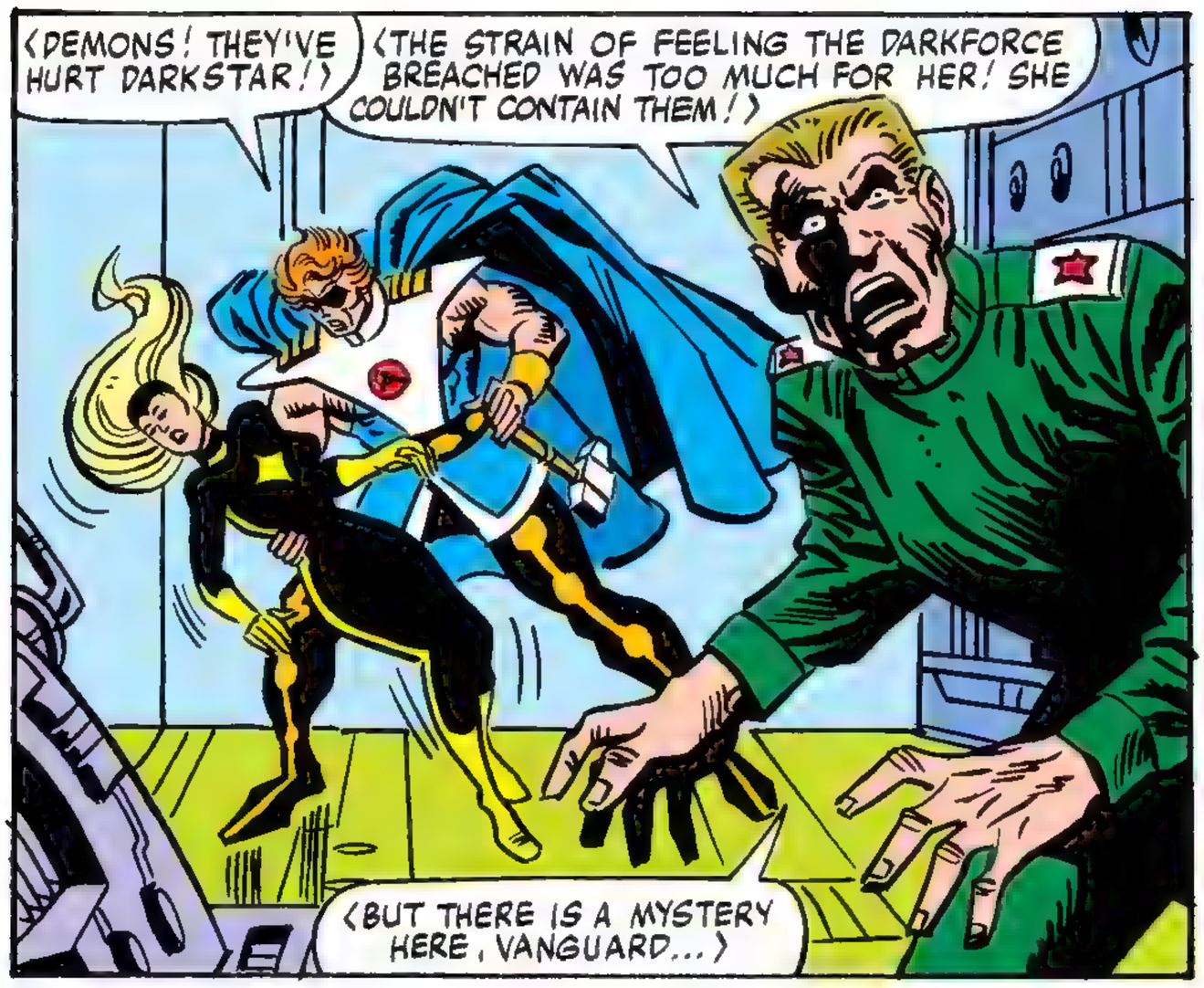

ON THAT CRYPTIC NOTE, THE SCENE SHIFTS TO A LABORATORY WHERE BRUCE BANNER AND PROFESSOR PHOBOS LABOR FEVERISHLY TO HARNESS THE FORCES OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE!
(I SEE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO CREATE, PROFESSOR--A STASIS FIELD TO CONTAIN SERGEI'S POWER!)
(YES, DR. BANNER--TO BIND HIM AND THE RED GUARDIAN WITH THEIR OWN AWESOME ENERGIES!)
(I COULD NOT HAVE COMPLETED IT SO QUICKLY WITHOUT YOUR HELP!)

MEANWHILE...
(THE DARKFORCE IS SUFFERING, VANGUARD! I CAN HEAR HER CRYING OUT!)
(WOULD THAT WE COULD HELP YOU, DARKSTAR--BUT IT IS YOUR POWER AGAINST SERGEI'S NOW!)
THE VALIANT GIRL SUPRESSES TEARS AND FIGHTS ON!

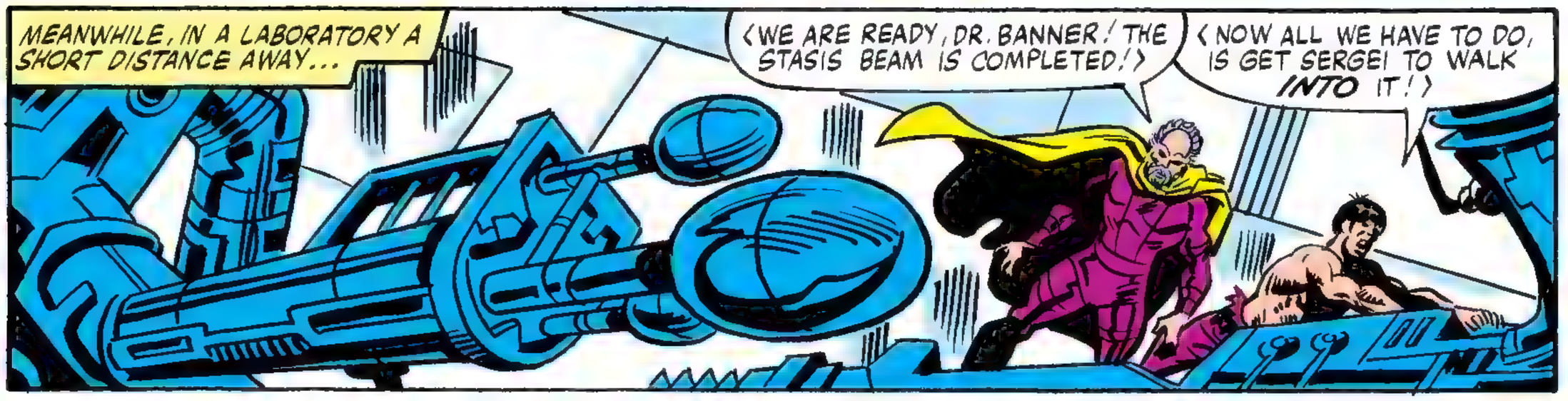
(BELOVED, I SEE A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS!)

(A PINHOLE, INFINITESIMALLY SMALL, BUT AN OPENING NONETHELESS--)
(--THROUGH WHICH, BY FOCUSING OUR COMBINED POWERS, WE MAY BE FREE!)
OOOHHHHHH
FROM BEYOND THE DARKNESS, A GROAN ESCAPES DARKSTAR'S LIPS...

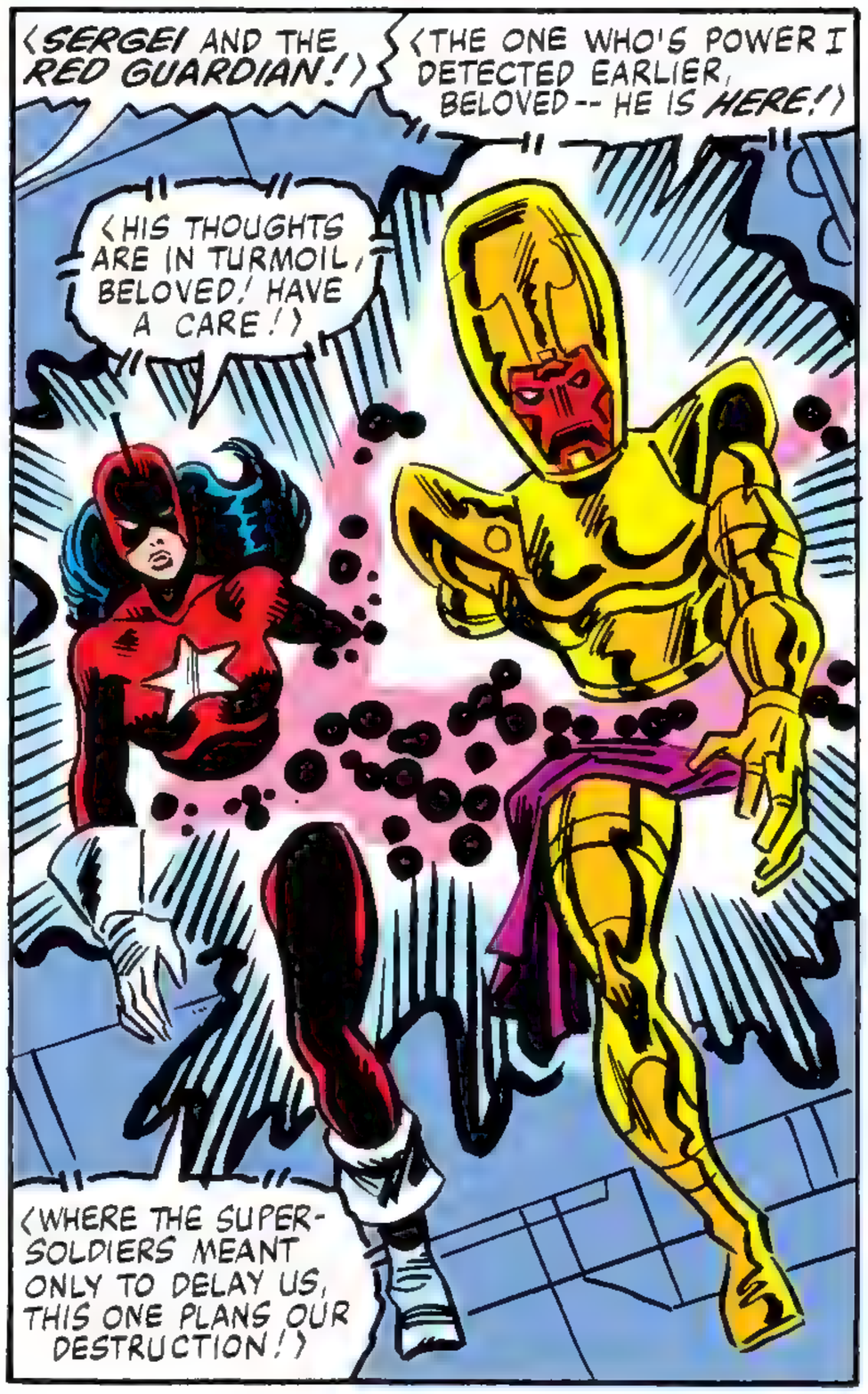
(YET OUR ACT HAS CAUSED THE GIRL PAIN!)
(YOU STILL CARE ABOUT THEM? I AM AMAZED!)

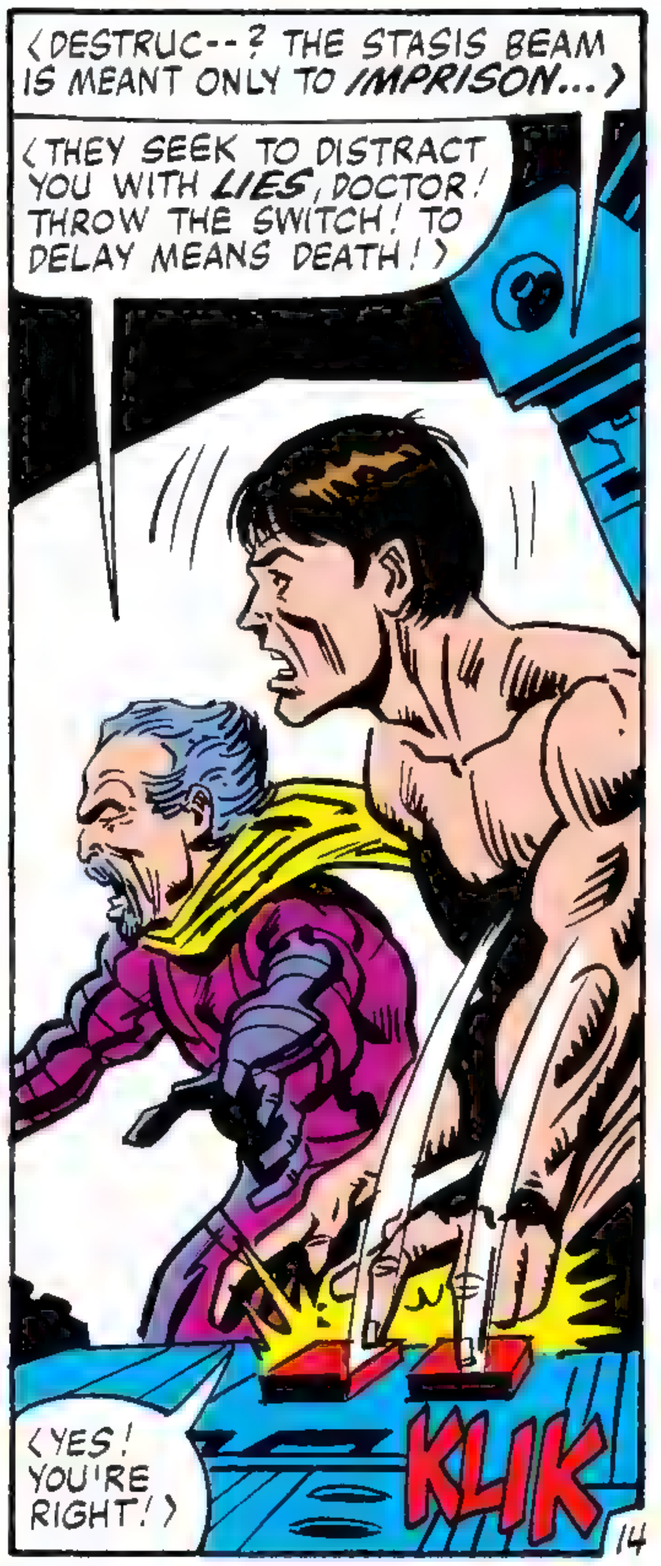

〈DEMONS! THEY'VE HURT DARKSTAR!〉
〈THE STRAIN OF FEELING THE DARKFORCE BREACHED WAS TOO MUCH FOR HER! SHE COULDN'T CONTAIN THEM!〉
〈BUT THERE IS A MYSTERY HERE, VANGUARD...〉

〈SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN COULD HAVE SLAIN US WHERE WE STOOD, YET THEY PASSED US BY! WHY, IF THEY MEAN TO DESTROY THE SOVIET UNION, DIDN'T THEY SIMPLY START BY DESTROYING US?〉
USED TO FIGHTING WITH HIS FISTS RATHER THAN HIS HEAD, VANGUARD FINDS HE HAS NO ANSWER.


MEANWHILE, IN A LABORATORY A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...
〈WE ARE READY, DR. BANNER! THE STASIS BEAM IS COMPLETED!〉
〈NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO, IS GET SERGEI TO WALK INTO IT!〉

〈YOUR WEAPON WILL BE USED SOONER THAN YOU SUSPECT! MY SUPER-SOLDIERS HAVE BOUGHT US ALL THE TIME THEY COULD!〉
〈NOW I SENSE THE IMMINENT APPROACH OF...〉


〈SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN!〉
〈THE ONE WHO'S POWER I DETECTED EARLIER, BELOVED -- HE IS HERE!〉
〈HIS THOUGHTS ARE IN TURMOIL, BELOVED! HAVE A CARE!〉
〈WHERE THE SUPER-SOLDIERS MEANT ONLY TO DELAY US, THIS ONE PLANS OUR DESTRUCTION!〉


〈DESTRUC--? THE STASIS BEAM IS MEANT ONLY TO IMPRISON...〉
〈THEY SEEK TO DISTRACT YOU WITH LIES, DOCTOR! THROW THE SWITCH! TO DELAY MEANS DEATH!〉
〈YES! YOU'RE RIGHT!〉
KLIK!

〈SERGEI! BELOVED...!〉

〈I-I WOULD PROTECT YOU FROM THIS PAIN IF I COULD, BELOVED--BUT THE POWER WHICH LASHES OUR VERY ATOMS...*IS OUR OWN!*〉

AS SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN WRITHE IN THE STASIS FIELD, IMPOTENT AGAINST IT--

--THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS ARRIVE IN THE CHAMBER!

〈PRAISE HEAVEN, PROFESSOR PHOBOS IS ALL RIGHT!〉

〈DA, DARKSTAR! BUT WHAT IS HE SAYING--?!〉

〈*AT LAST!* AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I HAVE FINALLY ATTAINED THE MEANS TO BECOME SUPREMELY POWERFUL--TO DESTROY THE STATE THAT DARED DRIVE ME INTO *EXILE!*〉

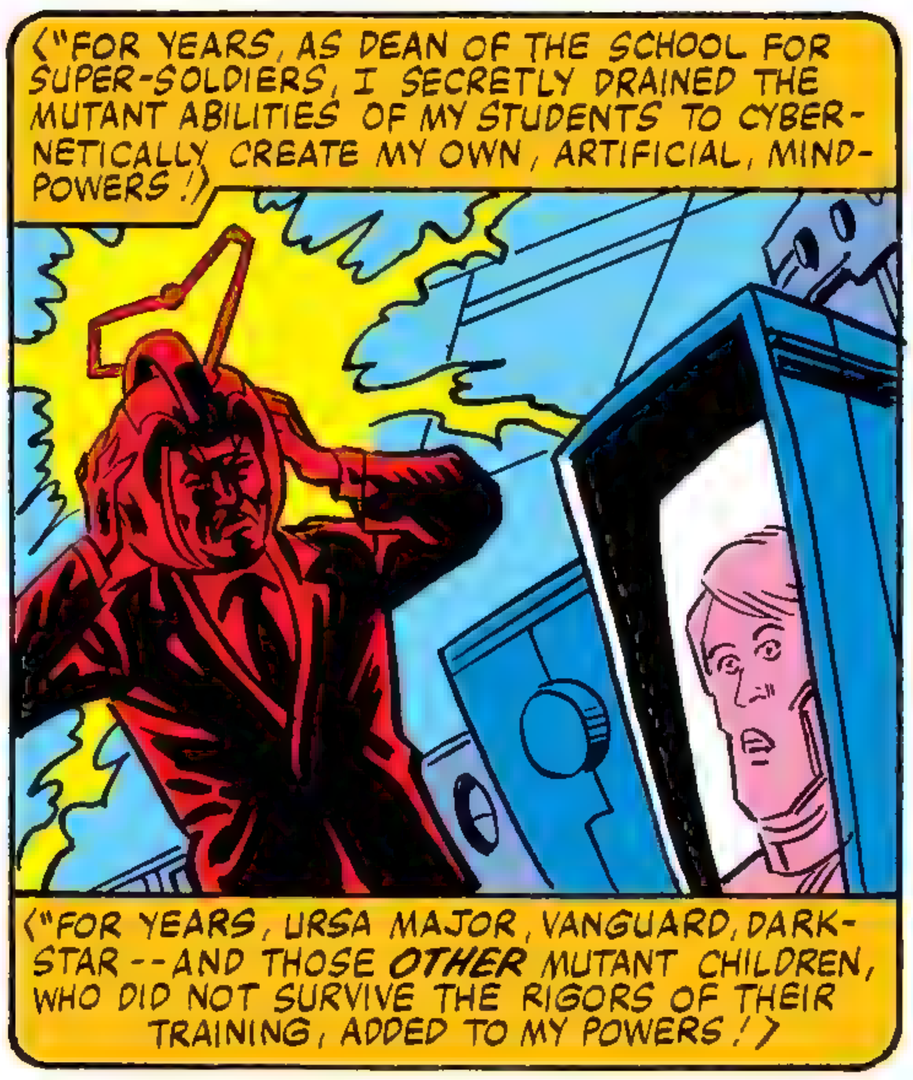
〈PROFESSOR, I--I DO NOT UNDERSTAND! DO YOU NOT MEAN TO USE THE POWER YOU ARE DRAINING FROM SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN TO *UNDO* THEIR EVIL--TO DECONTAMINATE THE FORBIDDEN ZONE?!〉

〈IS *THAT* HOW THE MIND-MANIPULATOR DECEIVED YOU?〉

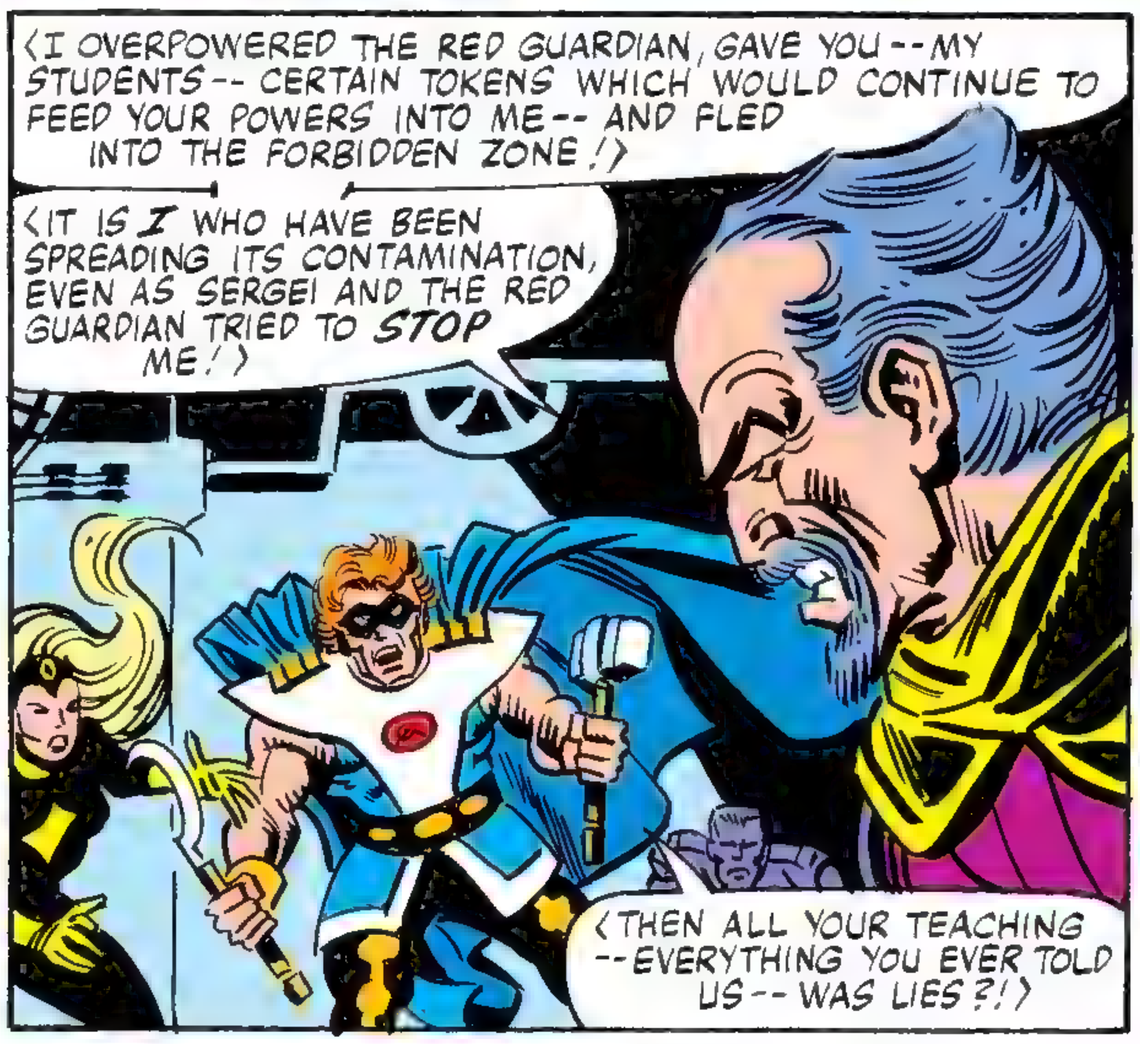
〈DECEIVED US--? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, RED GUARDIAN?〉

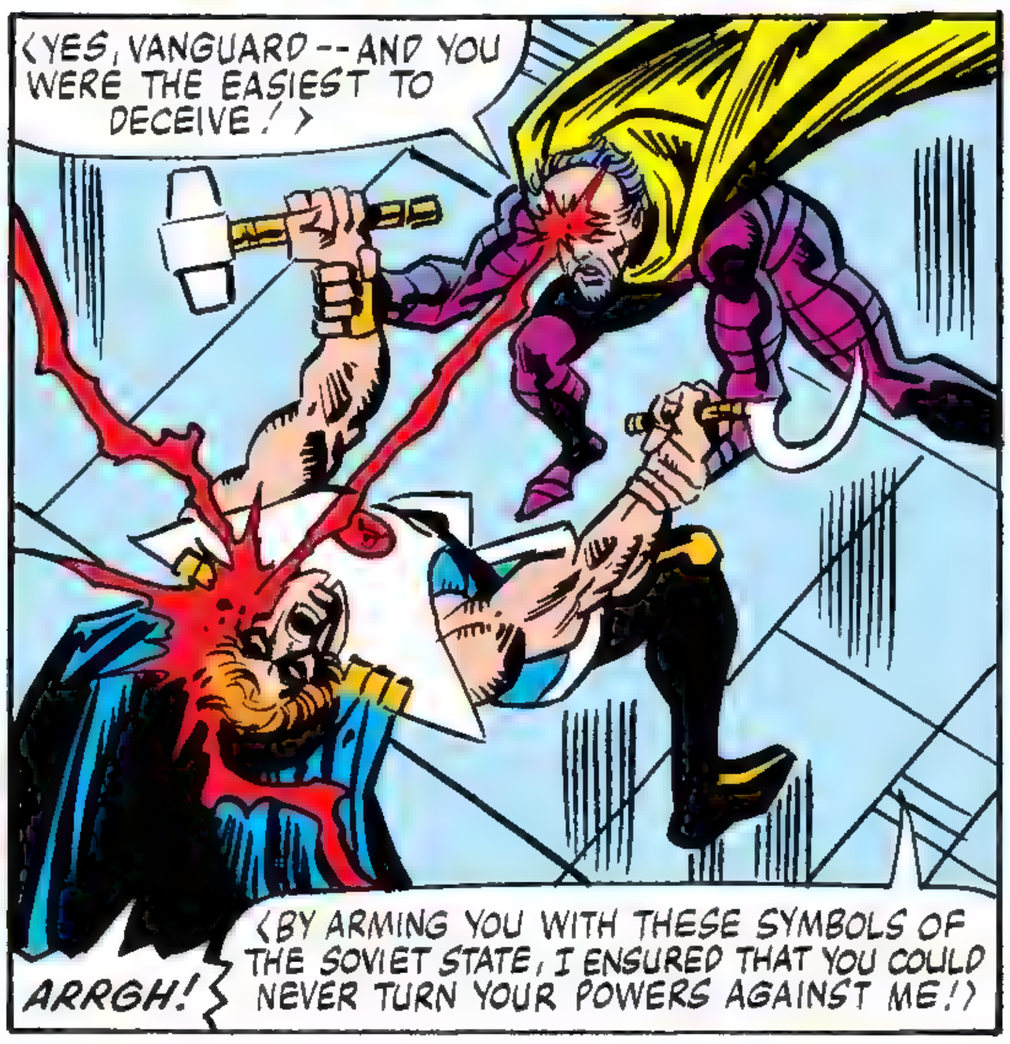
〈SO SURE IS THE MADMAN OF HIS TRIUMPH THAT HE HAS DROPPED HIS MIND-SCREEN--ALLOWING ME TO RECOGNIZE *PIETER PHOBOS*, A MAN WHOSE AIMS ARE NOW WHAT THEY HAVE *EVER* BEEN... TO *STEAL* POWER FROM OTHERS AND USE IT TO ATTACK THE SOVIET STATE!〉

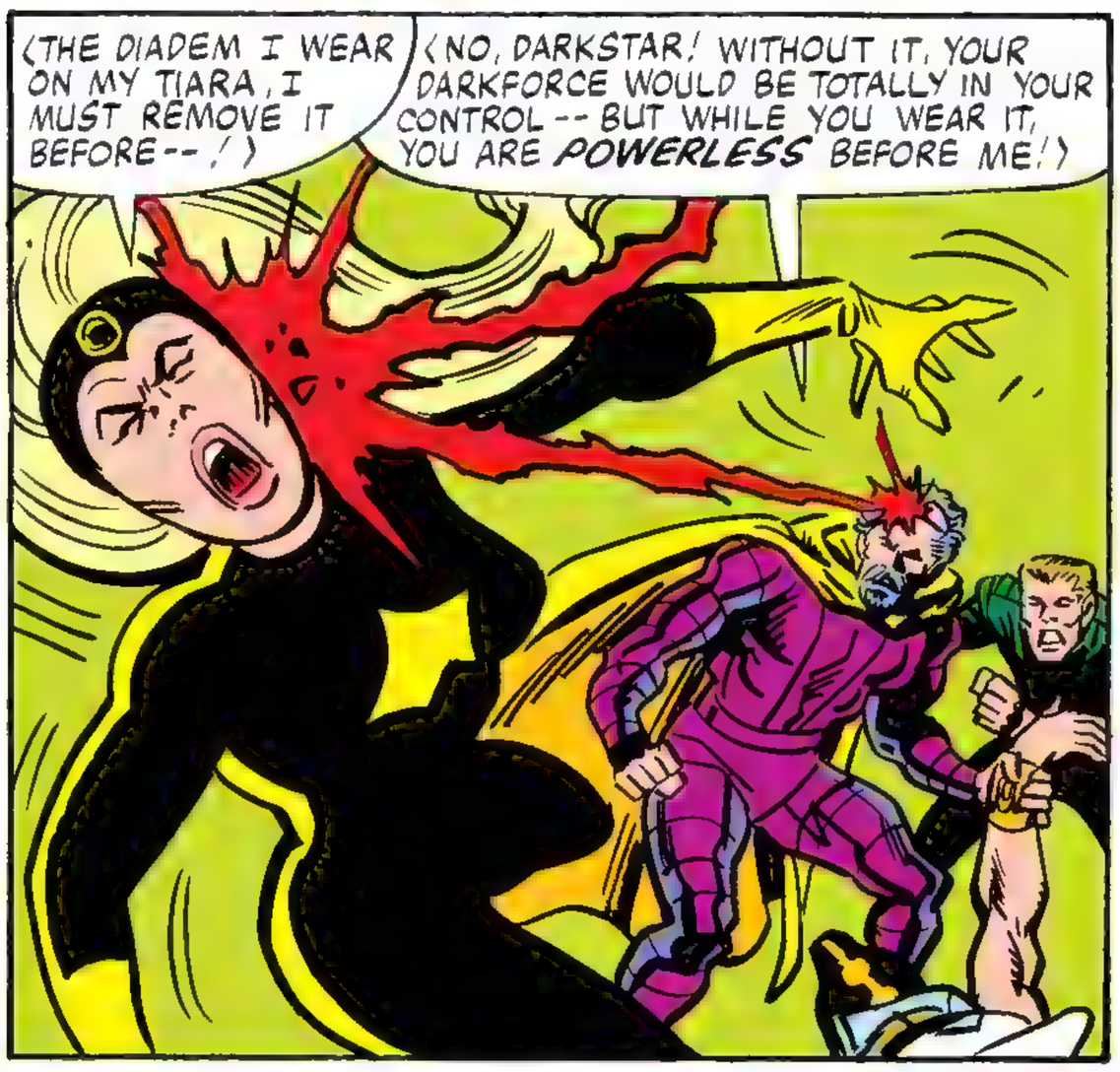
(CORRECT, RED GUARDIAN! I AM--AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN--A POWER PARASITE!)


("FOR YEARS, AS DEAN OF THE SCHOOL FOR SUPER-SOLDIERS, I SECRETLY DRAINED THE MUTANT ABILITIES OF MY STUDENTS TO CYBERNETICALLY CREATE MY OWN, ARTIFICIAL, MIND-POWERS!)
("FOR YEARS, URSA MAJOR, VANGUARD, DARKSTAR--AND THOSE OTHER MUTANT CHILDREN, WHO DID NOT SURVIVE THE RIGORS OF THEIR TRAINING, ADDED TO MY POWERS!)

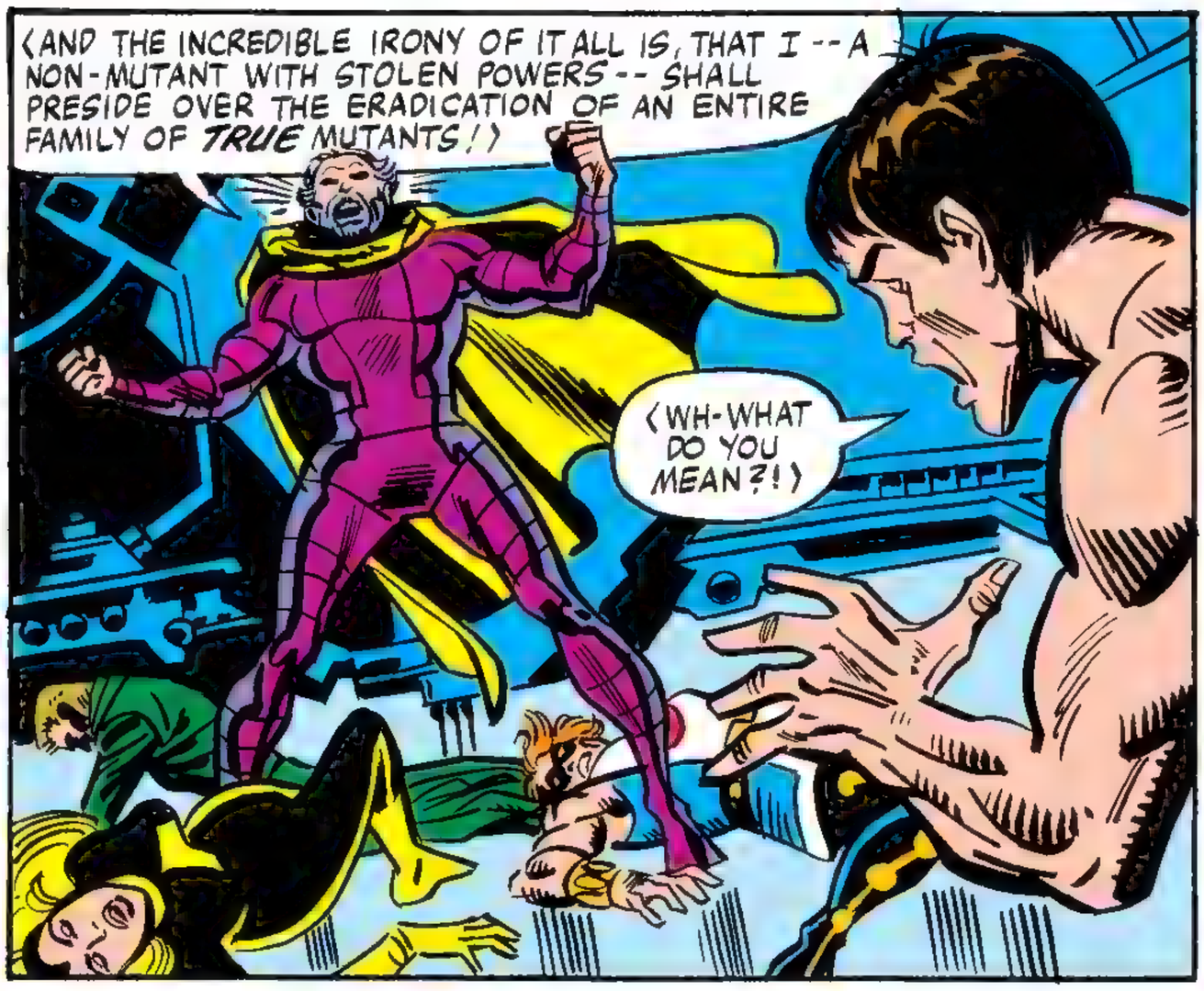
("THEN, I WAS DISCOVERED!")
(TRAITOR! THE STATE KNOWS HOW YOU HAVE USED THIS SCHOOL AND ITS STUDENTS TO FURTHER YOUR OWN ENDS!)

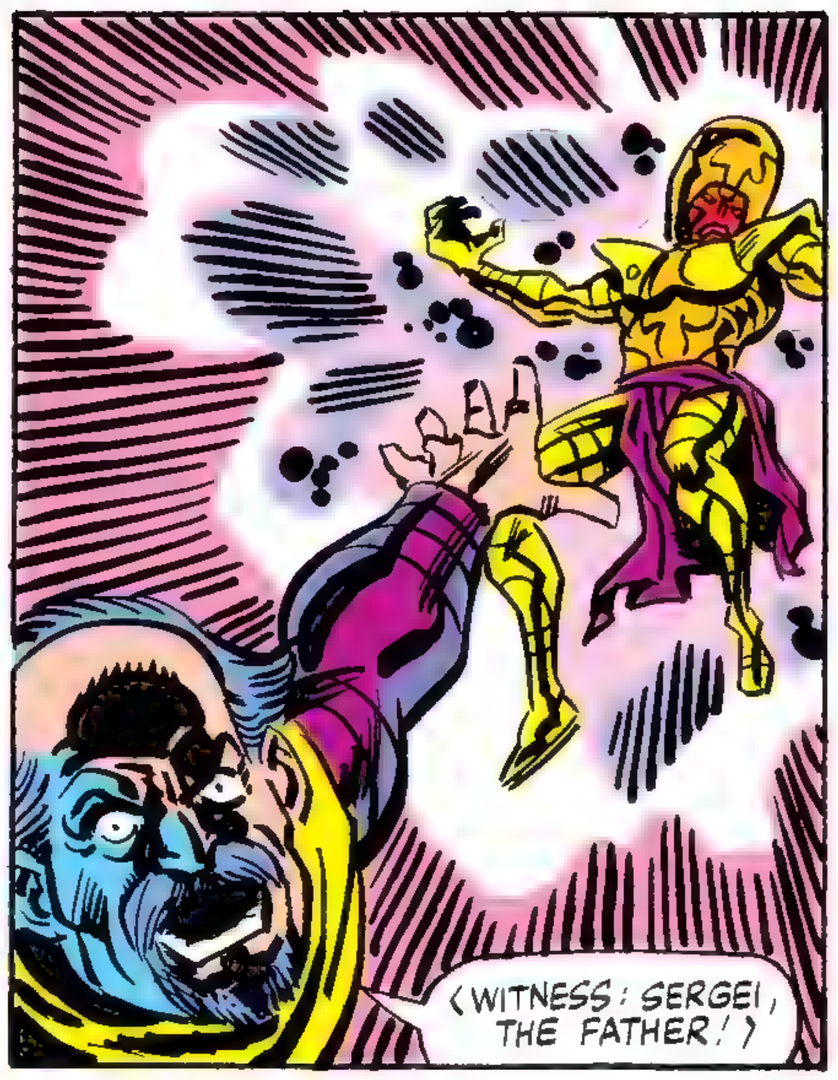

(I OVERPOWERED THE RED GUARDIAN, GAVE YOU--MY STUDENTS--CERTAIN TOKENS WHICH WOULD CONTINUE TO FEED YOUR POWERS INTO ME--AND FLED INTO THE FORBIDDEN ZONE!)
(IT IS I WHO HAVE BEEN SPREADING ITS CONTAMINATION, EVEN AS SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN TRIED TO STOP ME!)
(THEN ALL YOUR TEACHING--EVERYTHING YOU EVER TOLD US--WAS LIES?!)

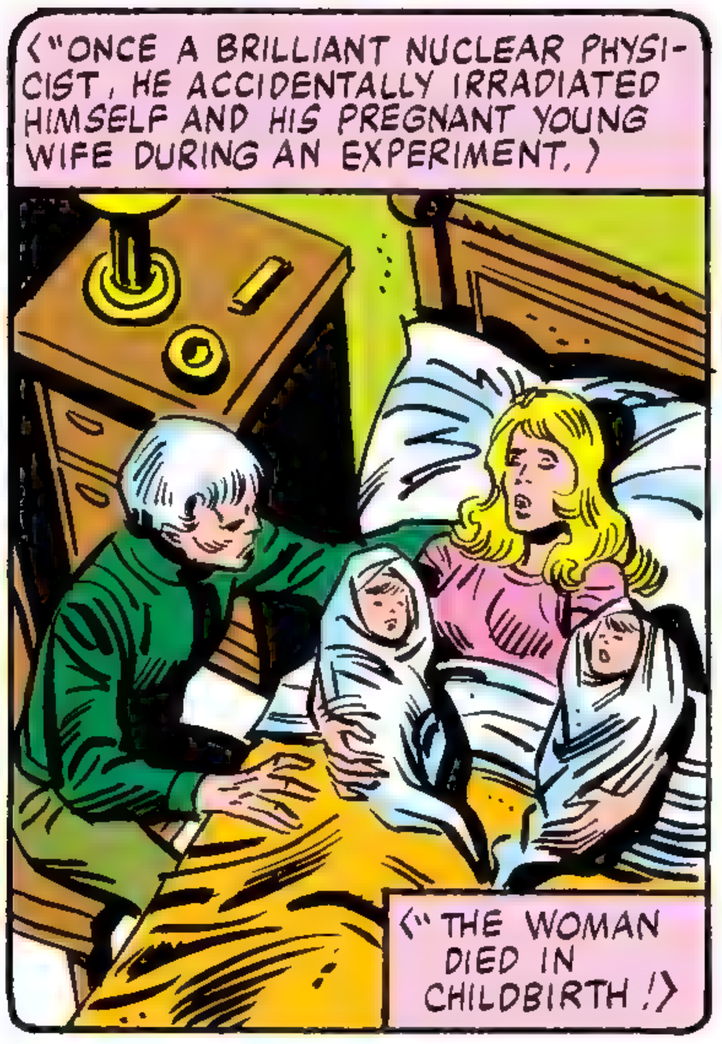

(YES, VANGUARD--AND YOU WERE THE EASIEST TO DECEIVE!)
ARRGH!
(BY ARMING YOU WITH THESE SYMBOLS OF THE SOVIET STATE, I ENSURED THAT YOU COULD NEVER TURN YOUR POWERS AGAINST ME!)

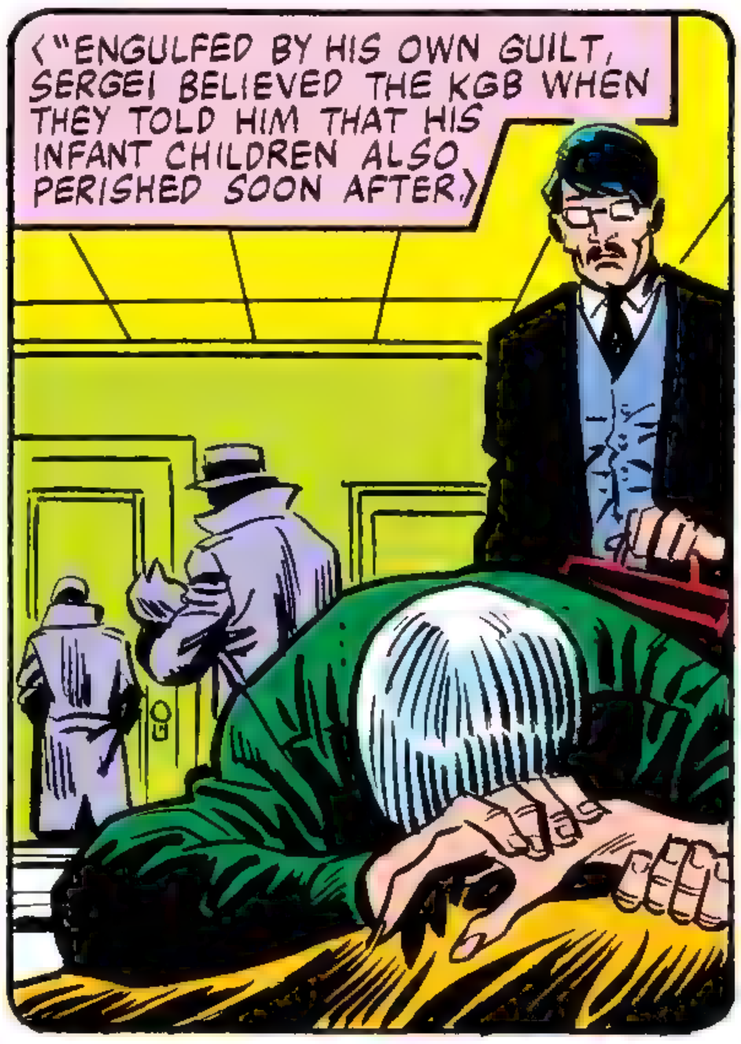

(THE DIADEM I WEAR ON MY TIARA, I MUST REMOVE IT BEFORE--!)
(NO, DARKSTAR! WITHOUT IT, YOUR DARKFORCE WOULD BE TOTALLY IN YOUR CONTROL--BUT WHILE YOU WEAR IT, YOU ARE POWERLESS BEFORE ME!)

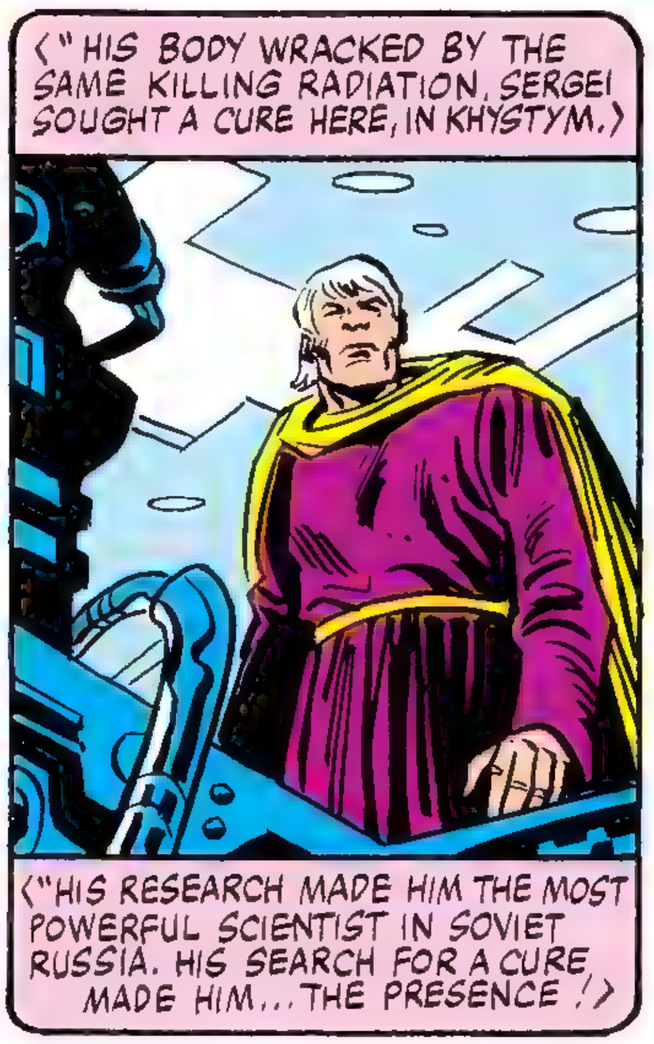
(AS FOR YOU, URSA MAJOR--WITHOUT YOUR SHAPE-SHIFTING ABILITIES WHICH SERGEI SO OBLIGINGLY REMOVED--)
(--YOU ARE LESS THAN NOTHING!)
SPAK

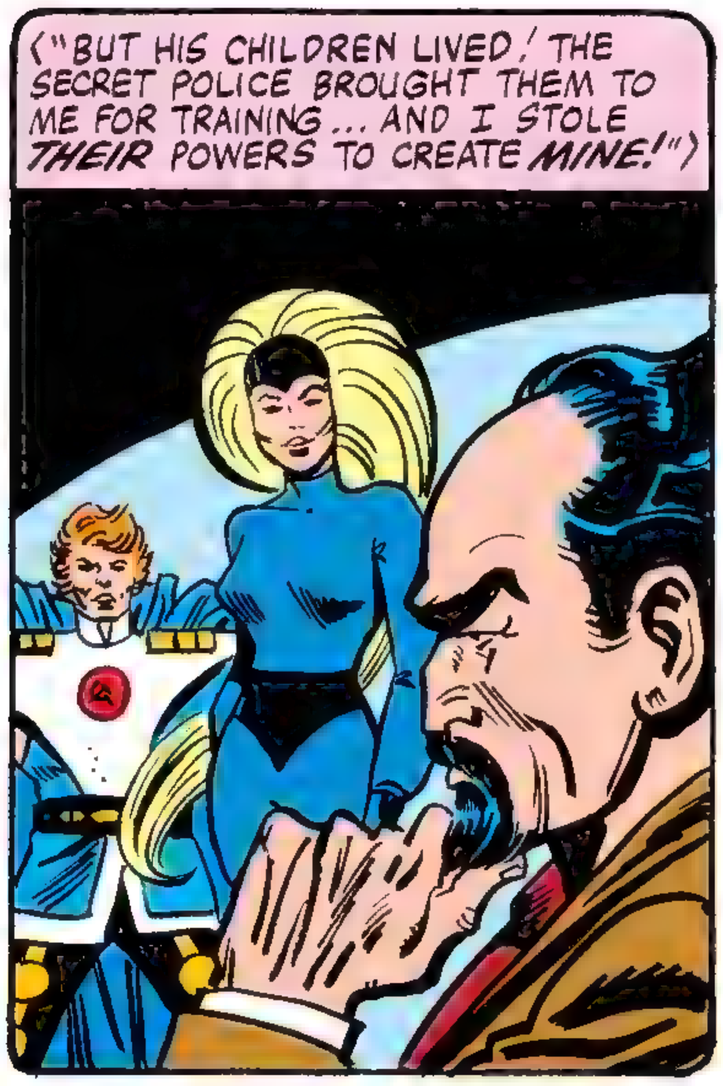

〈AND THE INCREDIBLE IRONY OF IT ALL IS, THAT I -- A NON-MUTANT WITH STOLEN POWERS -- SHALL PRESIDE OVER THE ERADICATION OF AN ENTIRE FAMILY OF TRUE MUTANTS!〉
〈WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!〉


〈WITNESS: SERGEI, THE FATHER!〉

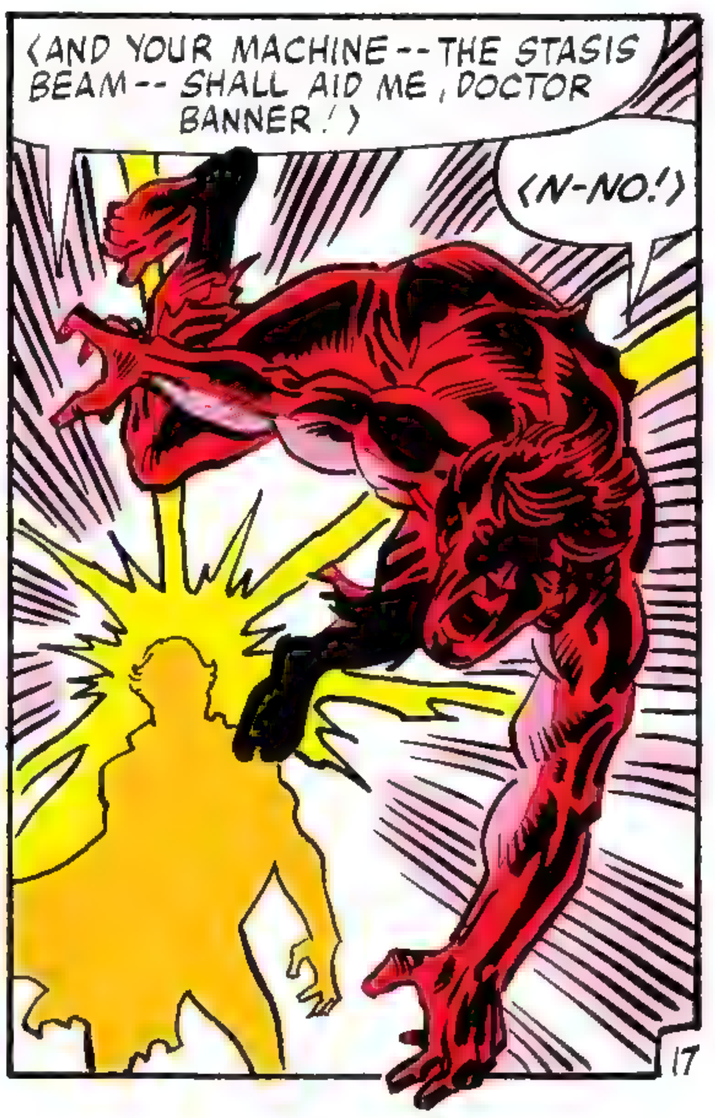

〈"ONCE A BRILLIANT NUCLEAR PHYSICIST, HE ACCIDENTALLY IRRADIATED HIMSELF AND HIS PREGNANT YOUNG WIFE DURING AN EXPERIMENT.〉
〈" THE WOMAN DIED IN CHILDBIRTH!〉

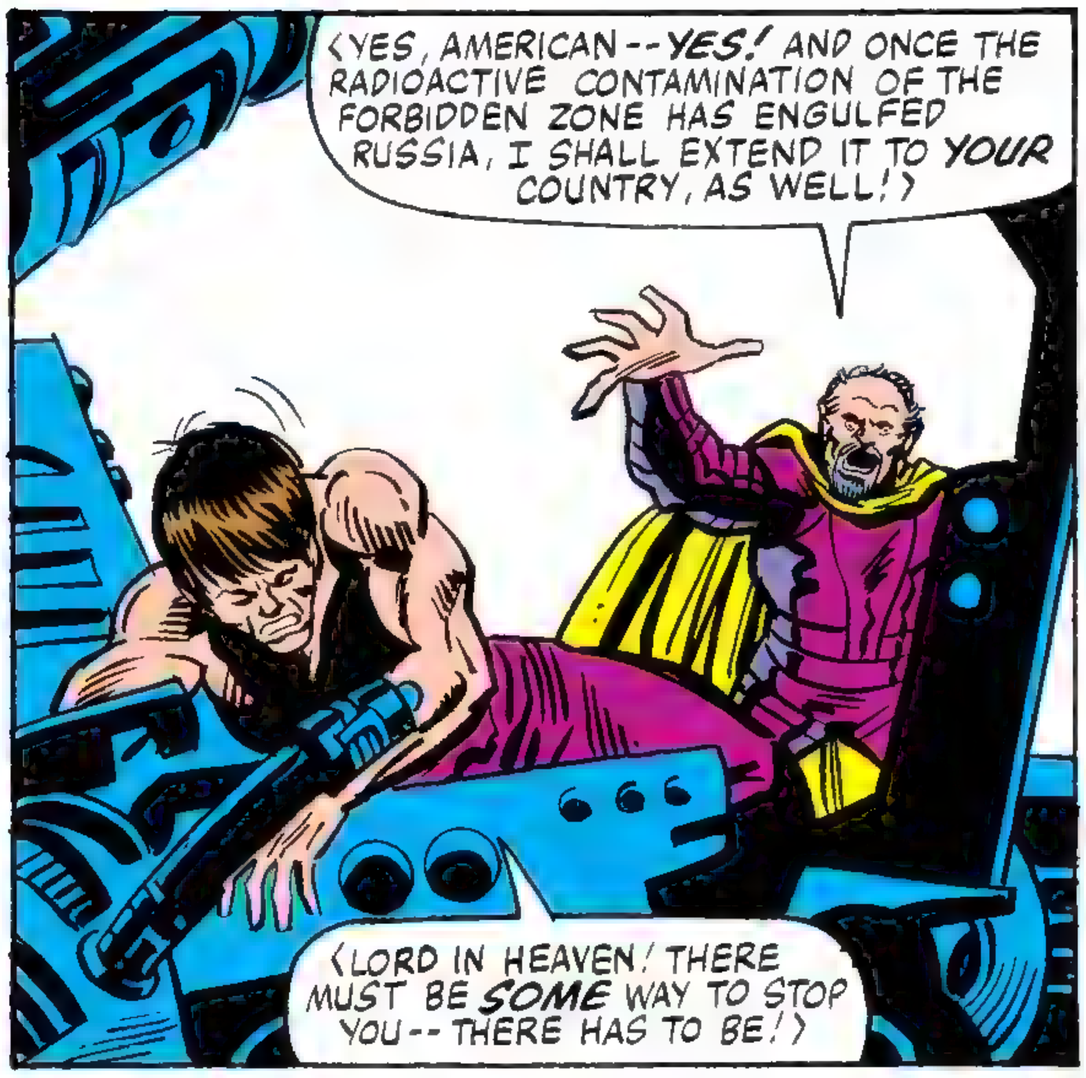

〈"ENGULFED BY HIS OWN GUILT, SERGEI BELIEVED THE KGB WHEN THEY TOLD HIM THAT HIS INFANT CHILDREN ALSO PERISHED SOON AFTER.〉


〈" HIS BODY WRACKED BY THE SAME KILLING RADIATION, SERGEI SOUGHT A CURE HERE, IN KHYSTYM.〉
〈"HIS RESEARCH MADE HIM THE MOST POWERFUL SCIENTIST IN SOVIET RUSSIA. HIS SEARCH FOR A CURE MADE HIM... THE PRESENCE!〉

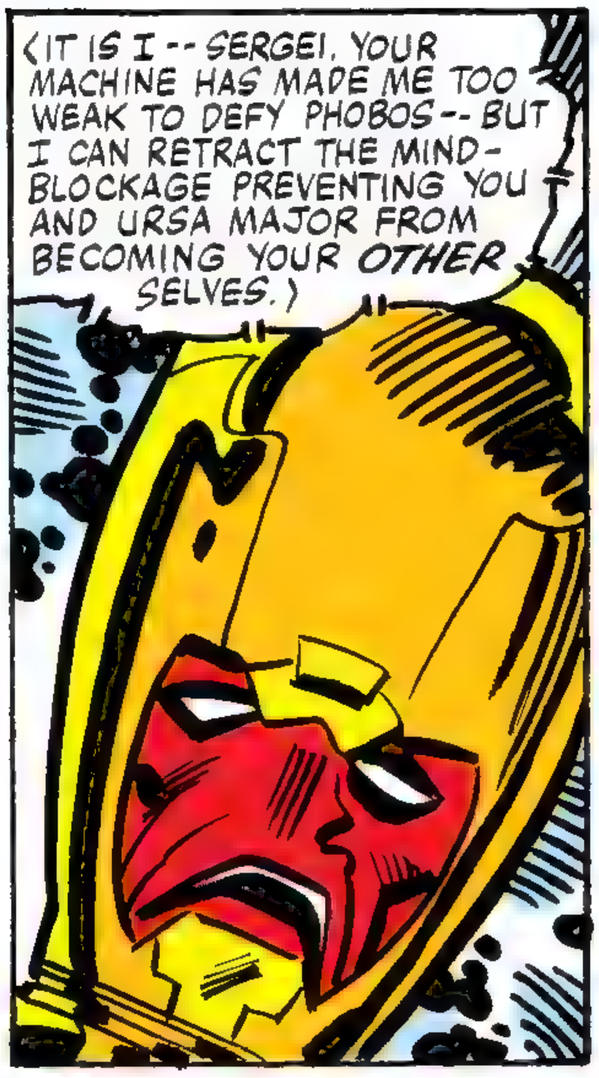

〈"BUT HIS CHILDREN LIVED! THE SECRET POLICE BROUGHT THEM TO ME FOR TRAINING... AND I STOLE THEIR POWERS TO CREATE MINE!"〉

〈AND NOW YOU'D SLAY THEM -- AND ENDANGER A COUNTRY CONTAINING HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AS WELL?!〉
〈AFTER IRRADIATING THEM ALL -- YES.〉
〈THE MORE MUTANTS I CREATE, THE MORE POWER WILL EXIST FOR ME TO SIPHON INTO MYSELF!〉


〈AND YOUR MACHINE -- THE STASIS BEAM -- SHALL AID ME, DOCTOR BANNER!〉
〈N-NO!〉


〈YES, AMERICAN--YES! AND ONCE THE RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE HAS ENGULFED RUSSIA, I SHALL EXTEND IT TO YOUR COUNTRY, AS WELL!〉
〈LORD IN HEAVEN! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO STOP YOU--THERE HAS TO BE!〉

〈THERE IS, DR. BANNER!〉
〈EH? A THOUGHT WHISPERING IN MY MIND?!〉

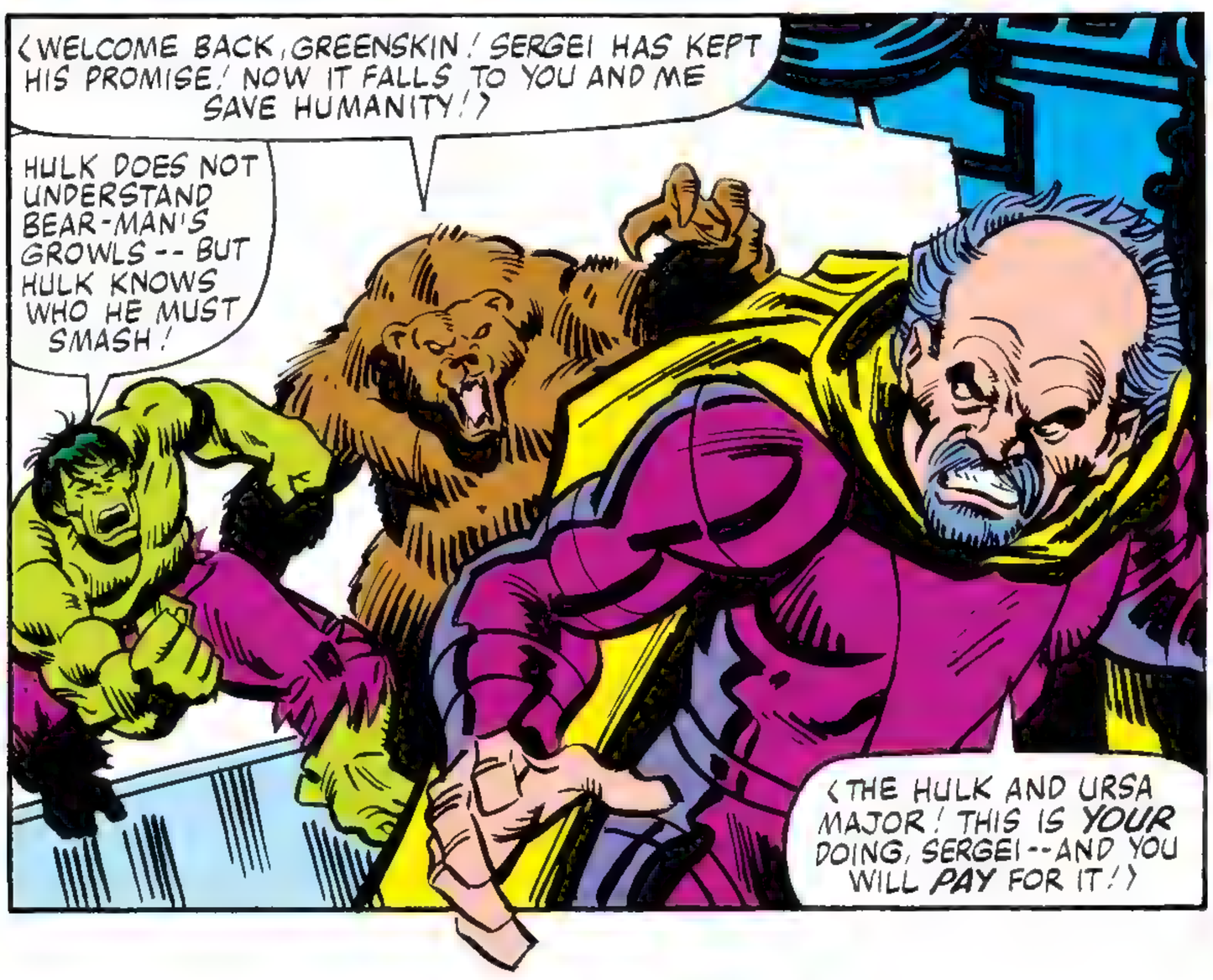

〈IT IS I--SERGEI. YOUR MACHINE HAS MADE ME TOO WEAK TO DEFY PHOBOS--BUT I CAN RETRACT THE MIND-BLOCKAGE PREVENTING YOU AND URSA MAJOR FROM BECOMING YOUR OTHER SELVES.〉

〈Y-YOU CAN MAKE ME THE HULK AGAIN?

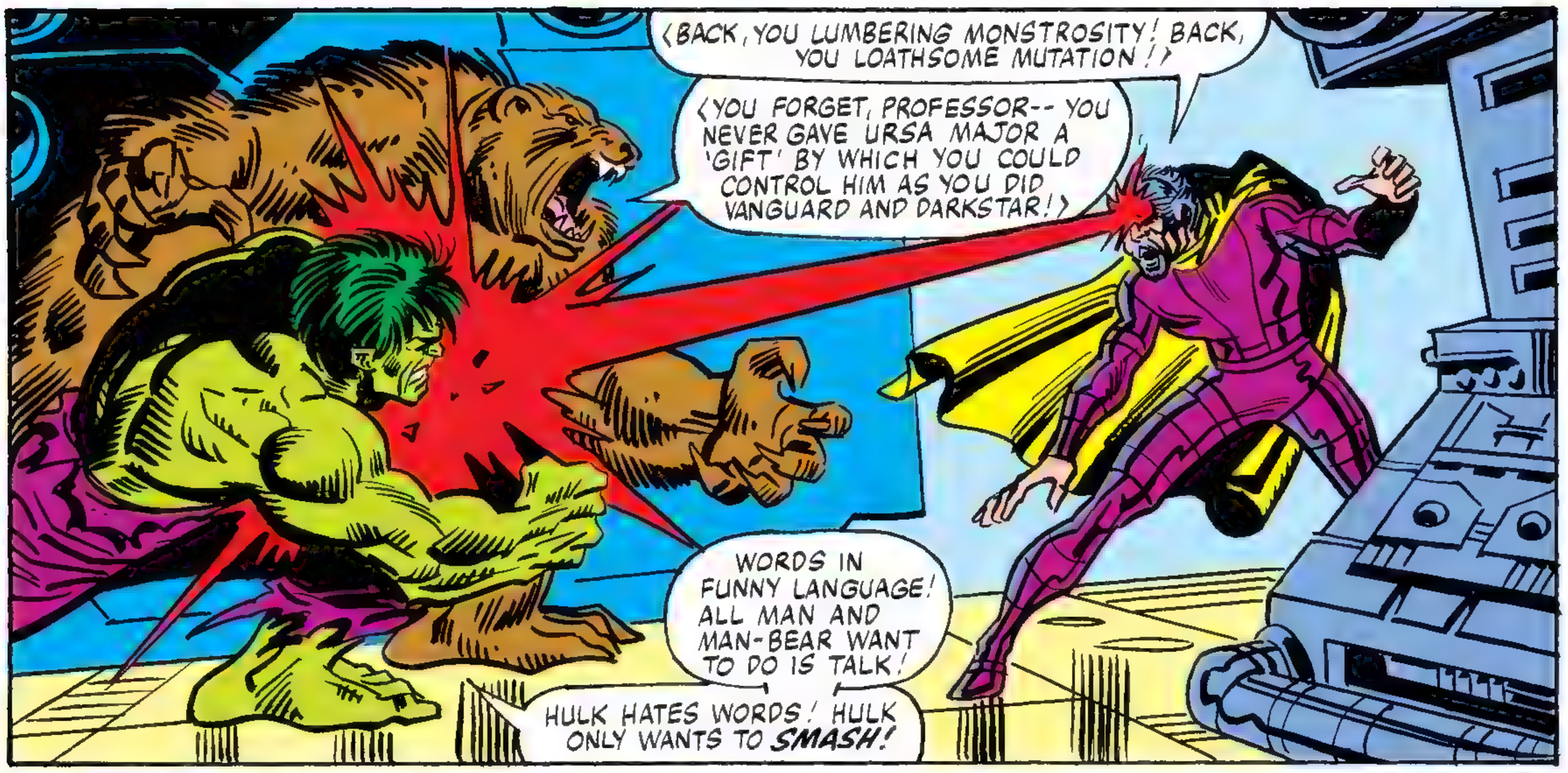
〈IS THAT THE PRICE I MUST PAY FOR SAVING MY WORLD?〉

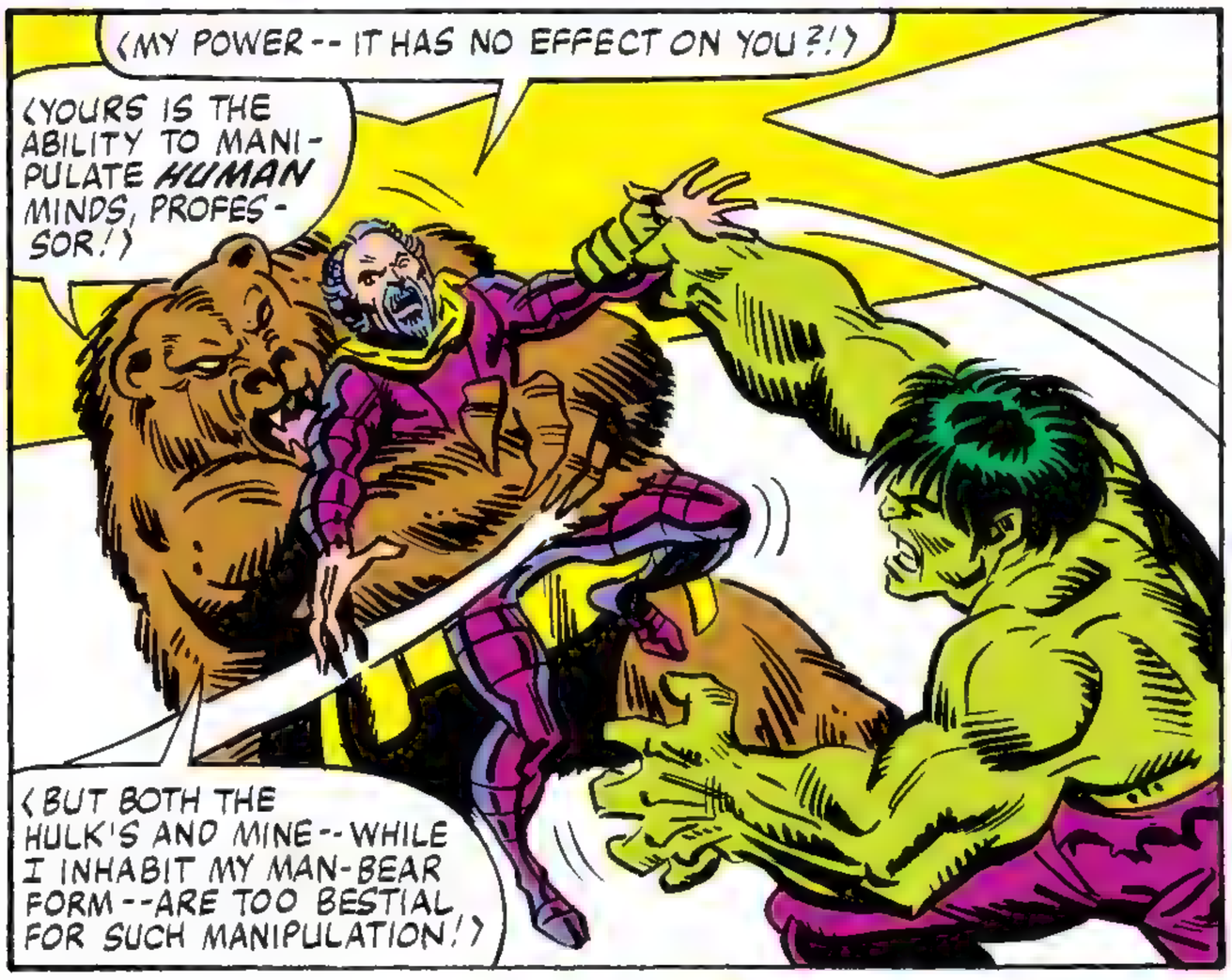
〈DO IT, THEN! GOD HELP ME, LET THE MAN BECOME--

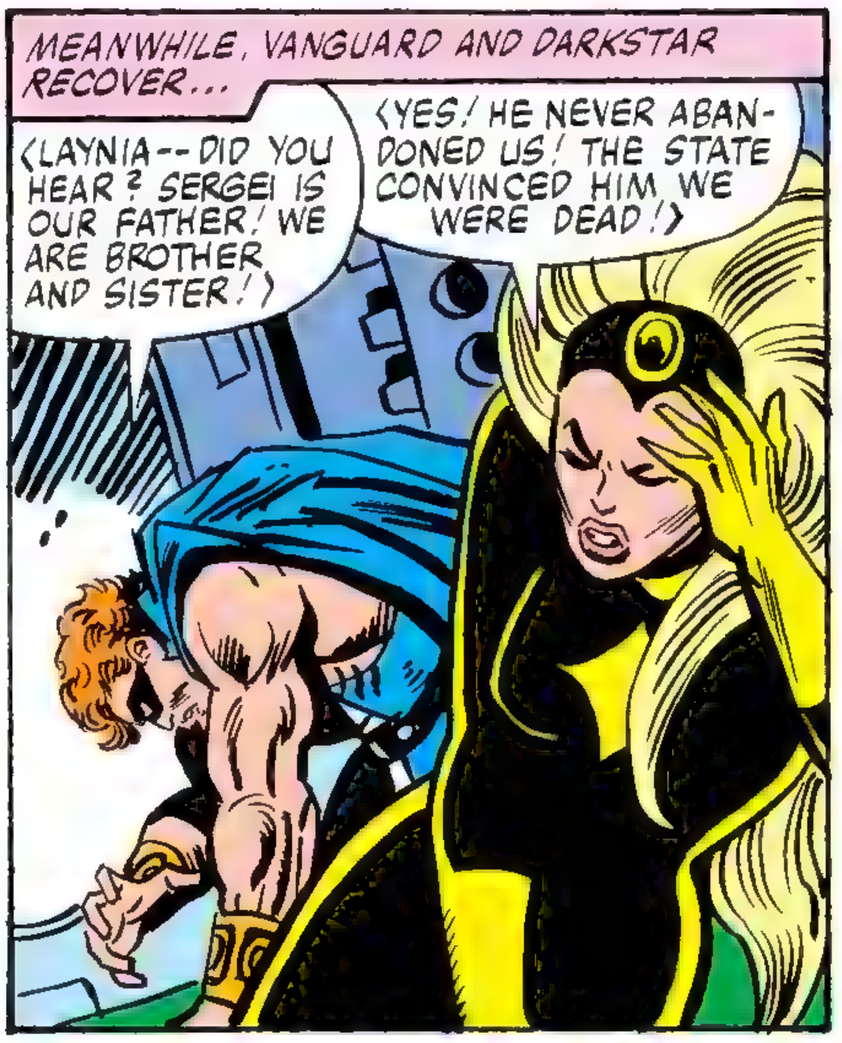
--THE MONSTER!


〈WELCOME BACK, GREENSKIN! SERGEI HAS KEPT HIS PROMISE! NOW IT FALLS TO YOU AND ME SAVE HUMANITY!〉
HULK DOES NOT UNDERSTAND BEAR-MAN'S GROWLS--BUT HULK KNOWS WHO HE MUST SMASH!
〈THE HULK AND URSA MAJOR! THIS IS YOUR DOING, SERGEI--AND YOU WILL PAY FOR IT!〉

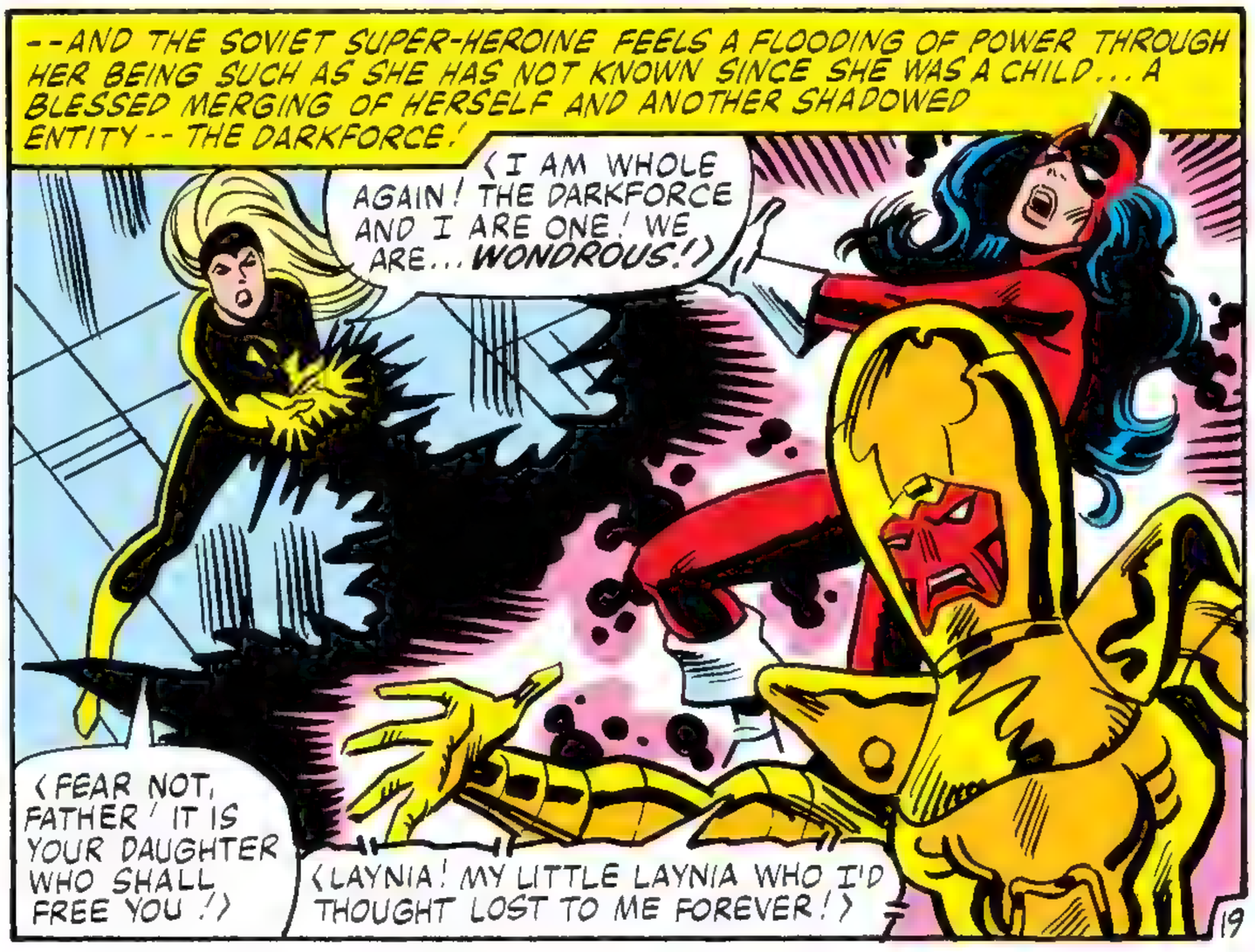
〈THE STASIS BEAM IS INTENSIFYING, BELOVED!〉
〈PHOBOS IS DRAINING OUR POWER MORE QUICKLY TO STRIKE AT HIS ENEMIES--AND TO SPEED UP THE SPREAD OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE!〉


〈BACK, YOU LUMBERING MONSTROSITY! BACK, YOU LOATHSOME MUTATION!〉
〈YOU FORGET, PROFESSOR-- YOU NEVER GAVE URSA MAJOR A 'GIFT' BY WHICH YOU COULD CONTROL HIM AS YOU DID VANGUARD AND DARKSTAR!〉
WORDS IN FUNNY LANGUAGE! ALL MAN AND MAN-BEAR WANT TO DO IS TALK!
HULK HATES WORDS! HULK ONLY WANTS TO SMASH!


〈MY POWER -- IT HAS NO EFFECT ON YOU?!〉
〈YOURS IS THE ABILITY TO MANIPULATE HUMAN MINDS, PROFESSOR!〉
〈BUT BOTH THE HULK'S AND MINE -- WHILE I INHABIT MY MAN-BEAR FORM -- ARE TOO BESTIAL FOR SUCH MANIPULATION!〉


MEANWHILE, VANGUARD AND DARKSTAR RECOVER...
〈LAYNIA -- DID YOU HEAR? SERGEI IS OUR FATHER! WE ARE BROTHER AND SISTER!〉
〈YES! HE NEVER ABANDONED US! THE STATE CONVINCED HIM WE WERE DEAD!〉

〈FOR YEARS WE BELIEVED THE STATE'S AND PROFESSOR PHOBOS'S LIES! NOW WE KNOW THE TRUTH --〉
〈-- AND IT SHALL FREE US FROM PAST LOYALTIES!〉
DARKSTAR REMOVES THE DIADEM FROM HER TIARA --


--AND THE SOVIET SUPER-HEROINE FEELS A FLOODING OF POWER THROUGH HER BEING SUCH AS SHE HAS NOT KNOWN SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD... A BLESSED MERGING OF HERSELF AND ANOTHER SHADOWED ENTITY -- THE DARKFORCE!
〈I AM WHOLE AGAIN! THE DARKFORCE AND I ARE ONE! WE ARE... WONDROUS!〉
〈FEAR NOT, FATHER! IT IS YOUR DAUGHTER WHO SHALL FREE YOU!〉
〈LAYNIA! MY LITTLE LAYNIA WHO I'D THOUGHT LOST TO ME FOREVER!〉

〈NOW, PHOBOS--YOU WILL FEEL OUR POWER!〉

〈*ARRGH!* YOUR GRIP--CRUSHING MY RIBS, EVEN AS THE MAN-MONSTER TEARS MY ARMOR FROM ME--!〉

MAN TRIED TO HELP PUNY BANNER! HULK *HATES* BANNER AND NOW, HULK HATES THIS MAN!

〈MY HAMMER AND SICKLE HAVE BEEN PURGED OF PHOBOS'S HELLISH CONTROL!〉

〈MY POWER NOW FLOWS THROUGH THEM UNIMPEDED--THE POWER TO AID MY SISTER IN THE LIBERATION OF OUR FATHER!〉

〈MY CHILDREN, HEED MY WORDS--FOR TIME IS PRECIOUS! PHOBOS HAS CORRUPTED MY MACHINERY--〉

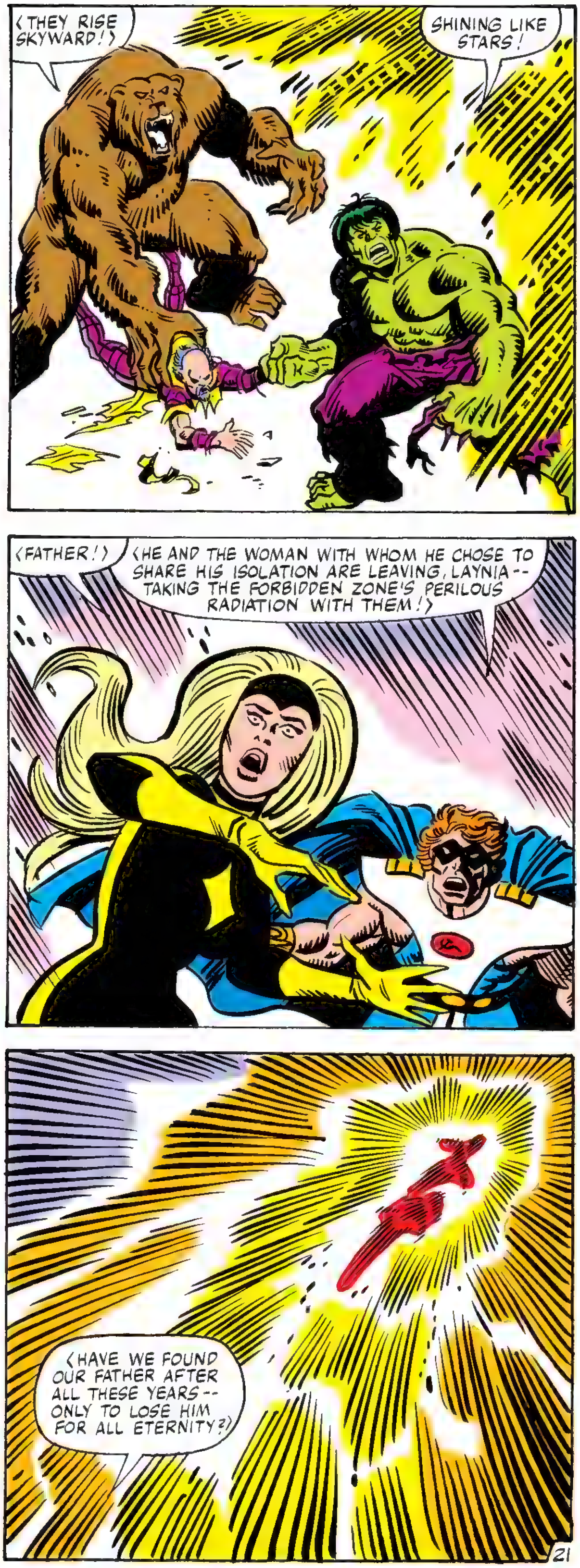
〈--USED IT TO MAKE THE RADIO-ACTIVE FORCES OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE MORE UNSTABLE THAN EVER!〉

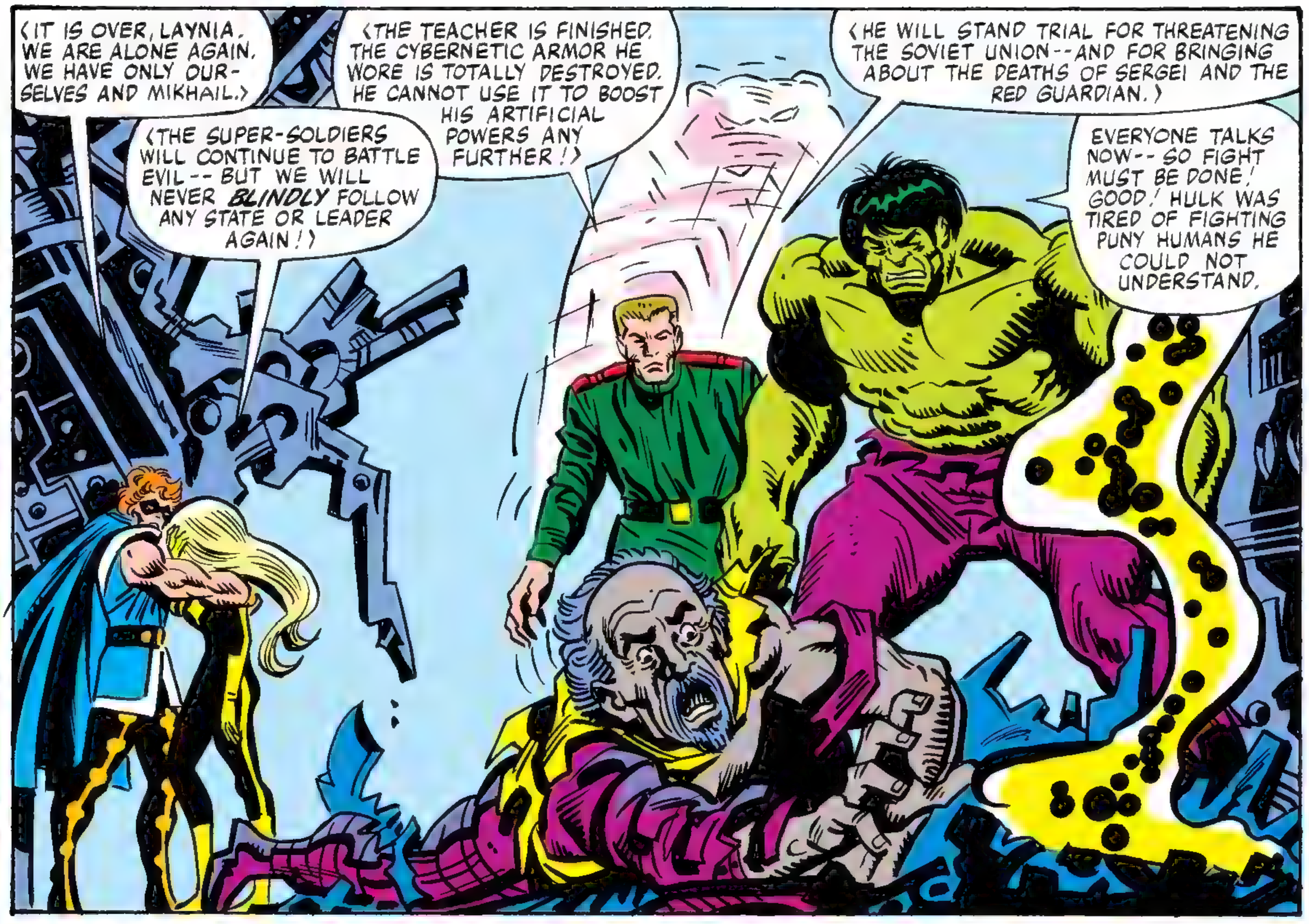
〈CAN WE NOT REBUILD IT, FATHER, BEFORE THE CONTAMINATION SPREADS BEYOND THE BORDERS OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE?〉

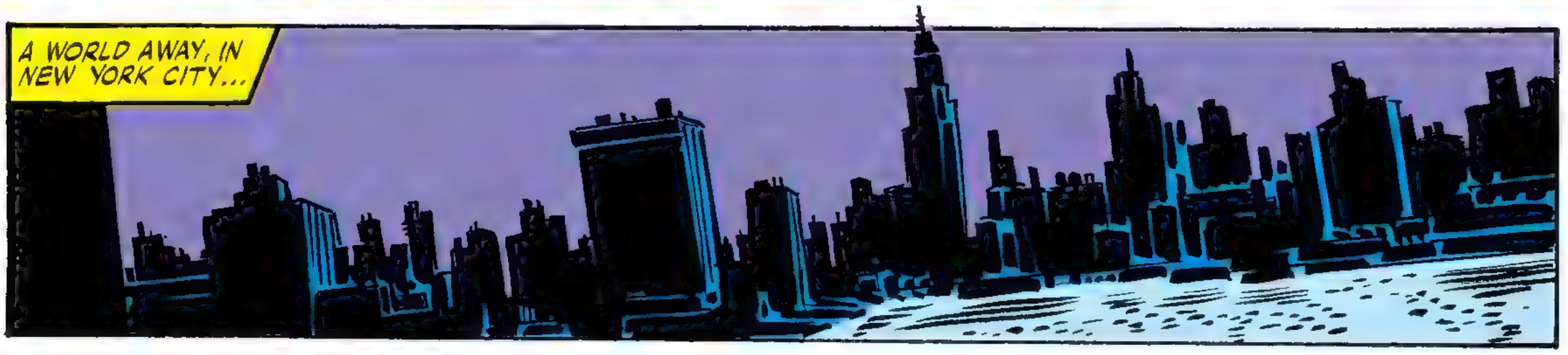
〈NO, MY SON! A CHAIN REACTION BUILDS--RADIO-ACTIVE MOLECULES REPLICATING THEMSELVES AT AN INCREDIBLE PACE! SOON, THE FORBIDDEN ZONE WILL ERUPT OUTWARD!〉

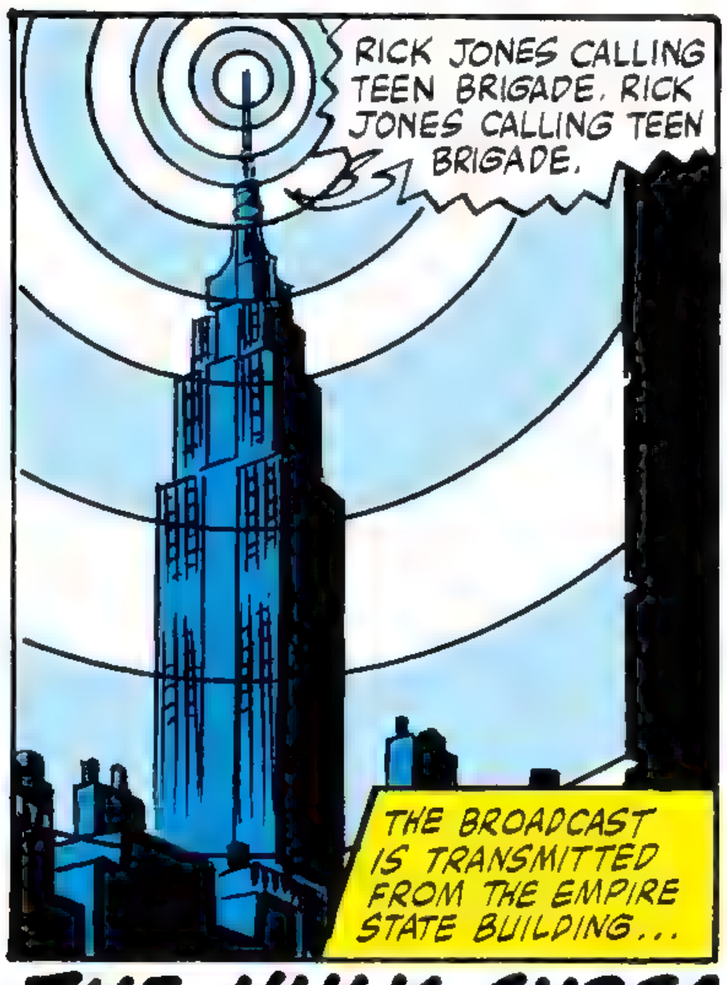
〈THE ONLY WAY TO PREVENT ITS SPREAD IS FOR THE RED GUARDIAN AND I TO ABSORB ITS UNSTABLE ENERGIES INTO OURSELVES--〉

〈-- AND, TO TRANSFORM IT AND OURSELVES INTO INERT MATTER FAR FROM THIS EARTHLY SPHERE! FAREWELL, MY CHILDREN -- FLESH OF MY FLESH -- BLOOD OF MY BLOOD! I NEVER BETRAYED YOU! I LOVED YOU WITH ALL MY HEART!〉
〈FAREWELL, EARTH -- PLANET OF MY BIRTH!〉
〈I GO TO DWELL FOR ALL ETERNITY WITH HIM WHO I LOVE ABOVE LIFE ITSELF!〉
THEIR THOUGHTS RINGING IN THE MINDS OF THOSE ASSEMBLED IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE--SERGEI AND THE RED GUARDIAN CONVERT TO PUREST ENERGY!


〈THEY RISE SKYWARD!〉
SHINING LIKE STARS!
〈FATHER!〉
〈HE AND THE WOMAN WITH WHOM HE CHOSE TO SHARE HIS ISOLATION ARE LEAVING, LAYNIA -- TAKING THE FORBIDDEN ZONE'S PERILOUS RADIATION WITH THEM!〉
〈HAVE WE FOUND OUR FATHER AFTER ALL THESE YEARS -- ONLY TO LOSE HIM FOR ALL ETERNITY?〉



THE HULK SURFACES IN JAPAN FOR A TALE CALLED...

# SUNSET OF A SAMURAI!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

TM

THE MACHINE...

...OR THE MOUNTAIN...

ED & AL '81

...WHICH ONE WILL *DESTROY* THE HULK?!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA / WRITER-STORYTELLERS-ARTIST | JIM NOVAK, LETTERS / BOB SHAREN, COLORS | ALLEN MILGROM / EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## SUNSET OF A SAMURAI!

ADDITIONAL INKS BY: TRAPANI, GIACOIA PATTERSON, SEVERIN & SIMONSON.

SANSHIRO SUGATA ROSE EARLY... WITH THE SUN. DONNING HIS CEREMONIAL ROBES AND EASING HIS SWORD THROUGH HIS SASH, HE LEFT HIS TRAILER BEFORE THE FILM CREW AWOKE, AND SLIPPED AWAY TO PRAY AT THE SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI.

ON THE WAY TO THE SHRINE, BIRDS SANG. IT WAS SPRING, AND THE SACRED GROVE WAS BURSTING WITH LIFE.

IT WAS PEACEFUL AT THE SHRINE. THE ANCIENT JADE BUDDHA SMILED DOWN SERENELY AT SANSHIRO SUGATA.

THE SMILE WAS SO PURE, SO ALL-KNOWING, IT MADE THE OLD MAN ASHAMED. HE MUMBLED A PRAYER, PRESSED HIS SAMURAI SWORD TO HIS FOREHEAD, AND RAISED IT UP.

HIS THOUGHTS WERE NOT ON THE FILM HE WAS TO BEGIN DIRECTING TODAY...

...BUT ON A PAST HE HAD BEEN BORN TOO LATE TO KNOW -- WHEN JAPAN WAS CALLED NIPPON, AND WHEN GREAT SHOGUN LORDS HAD TAKEN A PRIMITIVE ISLAND PEOPLE AND FORGED THEM INTO A MIGHTY EMPIRE.

ALL OF JAPAN'S ART, MUSIC, CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS HAD BEEN BORN IN THAT PAST. MEN HAD FOUGHT FOR THEM, DIED FOR THEM.

THE SAMURAI CODE OF HONOR HAD SUSTAINED THEM!

SANSHIRO SUGATA PRAYED THAT THE SAMURAI CODE WOULD NOW SUSTAIN HIM IN HIS DEALINGS WITH TWENTIETH CENTURY GREED, INSENSITIVITY AND INCOMPETENCE.

〈SUGATA-SAN, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?〉

〈WE HAVE ALREADY LOST PRECIOUS HOURS OF DAYLIGHT!〉

THEIR NAMES ARE UNIMPORTANT. SUGATA SARCASTICALLY REFERS TO THEM AS 'YIN' AND 'YANG'. THEY ARE HIS EMPLOYERS.

〈THE SET AND CAMERA CREWS ARE READY!〉

〈TIME IS MONEY!〉

〈WE HAVE ALREADY SPENT MILLIONS OF YEN ON -->

"...DRAGON OVER TOKYO!"

THEY RETURN TO THE MOVIE SET WHICH SPRAWLS OUTSIDE THE SACRED GROVE! A GREAT, BRONZE MONSTROSITY TOWERS OVER THE SCALE MODEL OF JAPAN'S CAPITAL CITY, AND THERE IS A FRENZY OF ACTIVITY AS ALL IS MADE READY FOR FILMING!

〈TO FILM HERE IS... SACRILEGE!〉

〈YOU'RE NOT STILL ON *THAT* KICK, ARE YOU, OLD MAN?〉

〈WE CLEARED EVERYTHING WITH THE PROPER AUTHORITIES!〉

〈LOOK, I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS OLD SHRINE, BUT NOBODY COMES HERE ANYMORE -- AND WE PLAN TO LEAVE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!〉

〈WE WOULD HAVE FILMED ***EVERYTHING*** IN THE STUDIO IF THE SCRIPT HADN'T CALLED FOR A VOLCANO TO BE IN THE BACKGROUND!〉

〈LIKE THIS SHRINE, MOUNT KUROISHI IS SACRED. OUR PRESENCE HERE IS A DESECRATION.〉

3

〈YOU AND THAT 'SAMURAI HONOR' BIT! LOOK, YOU SIGNED A CONTRACT WITH OUR OLD MAN TO MAKE FIVE FILMS FOR TODO PRODUCTIONS. YOU'VE ONLY MADE FOUR...〉

〈THE FILMS I MADE FOR YOUR FATHER WERE WORKS OF ART.〉

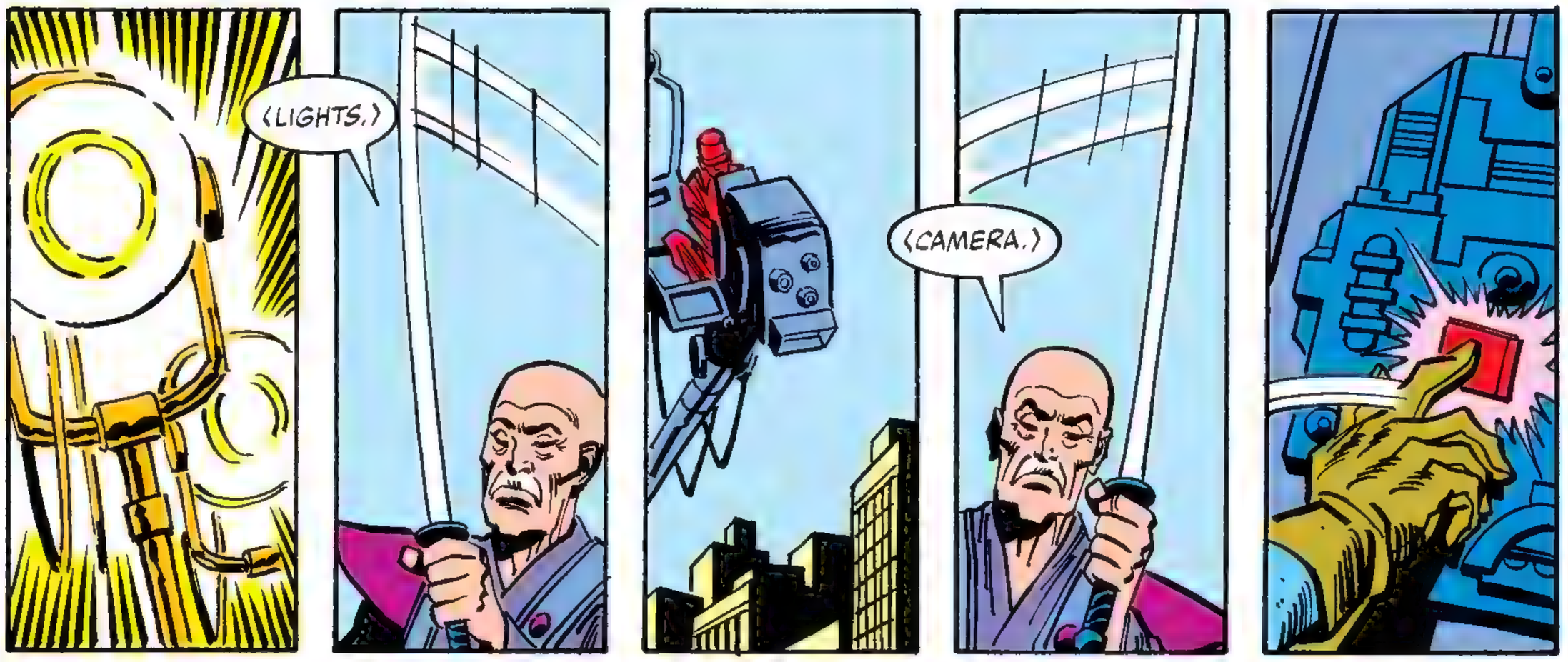
〈JAPANESE WESTERNS IS WHAT THEY WERE! BESIDES, POP'S DEAD! YOUR CONTRACT BINDS YOU TO ***US*** NOW! 'DRAGON' WILL MAKE A MINT!〉

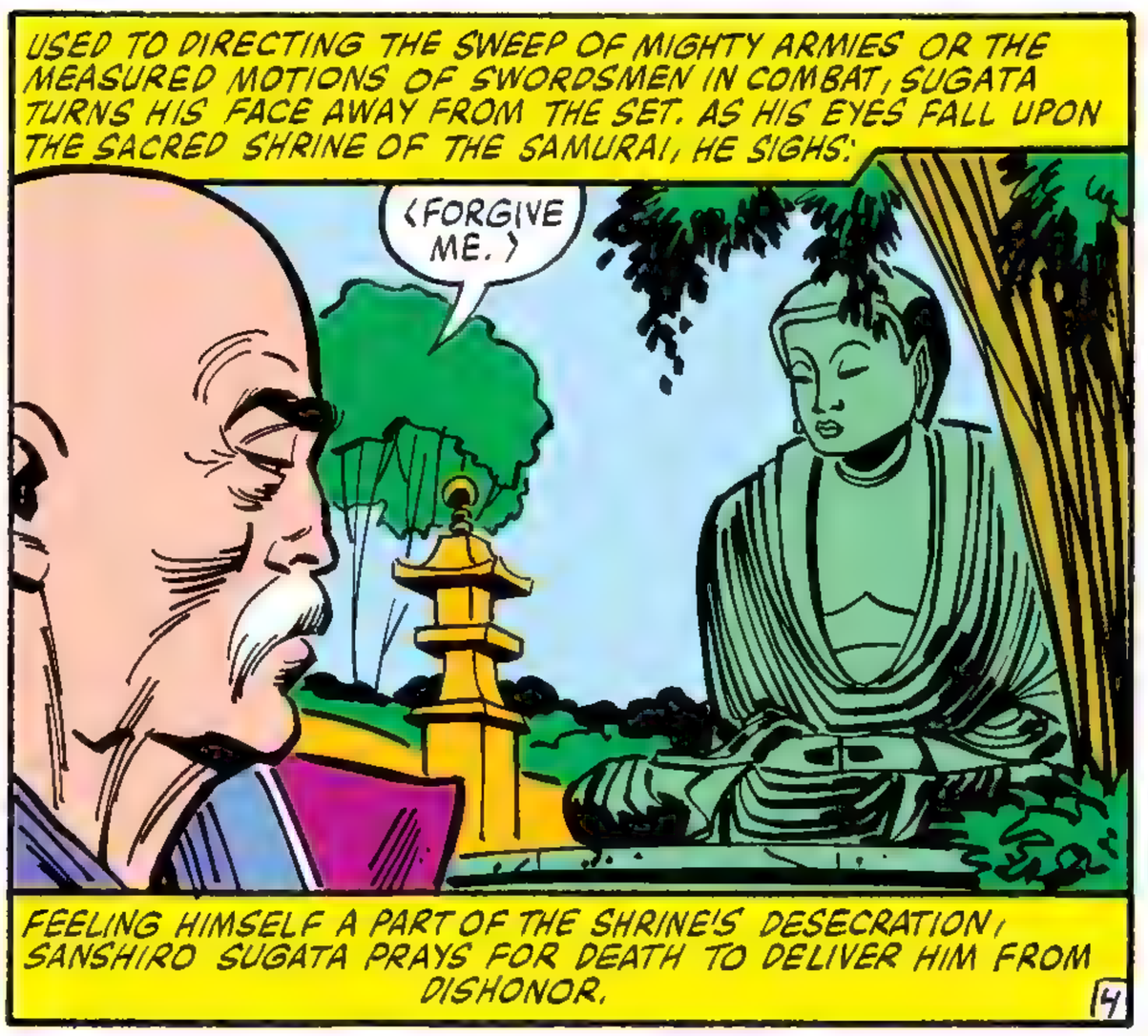
〈IT IS DISHONORABLE!〉

〈SO IS BEING DRAGGED INTO COURT FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT!〉

THE OLD DIRECTOR CURSES HIMSELF.

THE FATHER OF THESE IMPUDENT YOUTHS WAS AN HONORABLE MAN. HE WOULD NEVER HAVE BOUND SUGATA TO A CONTRACT REQUIRING THE DISTINGUISHED OLD FILMMAKER TO DIRECT TRASH. BUT HIS FRIEND IS DEAD, AND SUGATA SEES NO HONORABLE RECOURSE BUT TO FULFILL THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT TO WHICH HE SIGNED HIS NAME. AS HE HAS DONE COUNTLESS TIMES, ON INNUMERABLE PICTURES BEFORE, SANSHIRO SUGATA RAISES HIGH HIS SWORD.





NEARBY, A FISHING BOAT LETS DOWN ITS NETS IN THE SHADOW OF MOUNT KUROISHI.

LIKE HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM, BENKEI HAS FISHED THESE WATERS ALL HIS LIFE.

HE WORKS HARD, AND PAYS NO ATTENTION TO THE FILMING ON THE SLOPES OF THE SACRED MOUNTAIN.

BENKEI IS NO TRADITIONALIST. HE HAS NO TIME FOR THE PAST WITH ALL ITS TALES OF WARS, AND GODS, AND...

(DEMONS!)

THE WORD ERUPTS FROM BENKEI'S THROAT. HIS NET THRASHES IN HIS HANDS...

...AS HIS 'CATCH' GRASPS HOLD OF THE PAINS-TAKINGLY WOVEN FIBERS AND RIPS THEM APART!

WHAT DID LITTLE MAN CALL HULK?

AIIEEE!

IGNORING BENKEI'S INARTICULATE SCREAMS, THE JADE GIANT HOISTS HIMSELF ABOARD THE FRAGILE FISHING CRAFT...

...HIS ENORMOUS WEIGHT NEARLY CAPSIZING IT IN THE PROCESS.

HULK IS TIRED AND HUNGRY! HE HAS SWUM FOR DAYS!* DOES LITTLE MAN KNOW WHERE HULK CAN FIND FOOD?

*SINCE LEAVING THE SOVIET UNION AFTER LAST ISSUE'S LITTLE ESCAPADE -- AMIABLE AL.

WHY DOES LITTLE MAN MOAN? HULK HAS NOT HURT HIM -- WILL NOT HURT HIM IF HE WILL TELL HULK WHERE TO FIND...

HUNH! LAND! THAT IS WHERE HULK WILL FIND SOMETHING TO EAT!

SO THAT IS WHERE HULK WILL GO!

THE MIGHTIEST LEG MUSCLES OF ANY LIVING BEING PROPEL THE GREEN GOLIATH SHOREWARD!

FROOM

IN THE HULK'S WAKE, BENKEI PRAYS TO ALL THE GODS IN WHOM HE HAS NOT, HITHERTO, BELIEVED, THANKING THEM FOR HIS SALVATION.

HE WILL BRING FISH AND RICE TO THE SACRED SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI FROM THIS DAY FORWARD.

MEANWHILE, THE INCREDIBLE HULK CRASHES DOWN OUT OF THE SKY, ONTO THE FERTILE SLOPES OF THE LONG-DORMANT MOUNT KUROISHI.

NO PUNY HUMANS HERE! GOOD! EVERYWHERE HULK HAS GONE SO FAR HE HAS FOUND PUNY HUMANS WANTING TO TALK OR TO FIGHT!

HULK DOESN'T WANT TO DO EITHER!

HULK ONLY WANTS TO FIND SOMEPLACE WHERE HE CAN REST, EAT... AND BE LEFT ALONE.

THE TRADITIONALISTS OF BENKEI'S VILLAGE HAVE FAITHFULLY, DAY IN AND DAY OUT, MADE SIMPLE OFFERINGS BEFORE THESE EMERALD ALTARS.

IT IS THE FOOD THAT ATTRACTS THE GLOWERING MAN-MONSTER...

THE SLOPES OF MOUNT KUROISHI ARE DOTTED WITH NUMEROUS SMALLER SHRINES SIMILAR TO THE GREAT BUDDHA SEATED IN THE SACRED GROVE.

...BUT IT IS THE SERENE EXPRESSION ON THE GENTLE FACE OF THE JADE BUDDHA THAT HOLD'S THE HULK'S INTEREST AS HE APPEASES HIS APPETITE.

HUNH! LITTLE STATUE IS GREEN... LIKE HULK!

STATUE CANNOT EAT--YET PUNY HUMANS BRING STATUE FOOD! THEY MUST BE AFRAID OF STATUE LIKE THEY ARE AFRAID OF HULK!

MAYBE IT IS BECAUSE HULK AND STATUE ARE BOTH GREEN? YES, THAT IS IT! HULK AND STATUE ARE ON THE SAME SIDE!

HULK WILL STAY HERE, HIDING IN THE FOREST AND EAT THE FOOD THE PUNY HUMANS BRING TO THE STATUE! THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE GREEN!

BEHIND THE HULK, IN THE EARLY MORNING SKY, A STAR GLEAMS GOLDEN.

THEN, MOVING CLOSER, IT REVEALS ITSELF AS NO STELLAR BODY, BUT A MACHINE OF EARTHLY DESIGN...

...THE WAR-WAGON!

AT ITS HELM, COLONEL GLENN TALBOT, LATE OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ADDRESSES HIS ON-BOARD COMPUTER.

'BRAIN', I'M WAITING FOR A DATA REPORT ON OUR TARGET!

WE ARE TRACKING, SIR! THE HULK'S GAMMA RADIATION TRAIL, WHICH WE LOST DUE TO RADIOACTIVE INTERFERENCE OVER THE KHYSTYM REGION OF THE U.S.S.R.--

--HAS REAPPEARED AND LOCALIZED IN THE AREA OF MOUNT KUROISHI, JAPAN.

JAPAN? HMM, I DIDN'T MIND VIOLATING SOVIET AIRSPACE IN MY HUNT FOR THE HULK, BUT JAPAN AND AMERICA ARE ALLIES...

STILL, THAT GREEN-SKINNED GARGOYLE IS A MENACE TO THE ENTIRE WORLD! IF I'M TO DESTROY HIM, IT MUST BE HERE--AND NOW!

WITNESS... A MAN OBSESSED.

MEANWHILE, 'DRAGON OVER TOKYO' FALLS FARTHER AND FARTHER BEHIND IN ITS SHOOTING SCHEDULE...

CRARG

WHOO WHOO

(STOP!)

(CUT!)

(THIS IS NOT AN *ART FILM*, SUGATA!)

(THE DRAGON MOVES AS IF IT WERE ON A KABUKI STAGE!)

(I AM TRYING TO DIRECT THE MONSTER AS A CREATURE POSSESSED OF A CERTAIN GRACE...)

(GRACE?!)

(GRACE ISN'T WHAT MAKES MONEY, SUGATA-SAN! HORROR--TERROR--WANTON DESTRUCTION--*IS!* I WILL *SHOW* YOU WHAT I WANT!)

(WAIT! THIS IS THE MASTER-CONTROL PANEL!)

(I KNOW THAT, YOU DOLT! I PAID FOR IT, DIDN'T I? IT IS WHAT MAKES OUR MONSTER MOVE, BREATHE FIRE--)

(--AND DESTROY!)

RARRGH!

〈WONDERFUL, BROTHER! JAPANESE AND AMERICAN CHILDREN WILL SPEND A FORTUNE TO SEE OUR DRAGON WREAK HAVOC ON A MULTIMILLION DOLLAR SET!〉

〈WE WILL GIVE THEM--WHAT IS THE HOLLYWOOD EXPRESSION?-- A 'BIGGER BANG FOR THEIR BUCK'!〉

〈AS THIS FILM IS A DESECRATION OF THE SACRED SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI, MY PARTICIPATION IN IT IS ALSO A DESECRATION OF MY CAREER... AND MY LIFE.〉

〈I WISH I HAD THE COURAGE OF MY SAMURAI FOREFATHERS, I WOULD END BOTH MY CAREER AND MY LIFE BEFORE I HAVE NO FURTHER HONOR LEFT.〉

SANSHIRO SUGATA'S HAND TREMBLES ON HIS SWORD HILT!

SUDDENLY...

FRASH

STROOM!

〈GODS! MOUNT KUROISHI EXPLODES IN FIRE!〉

〈WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?〉

〈IT IS THE HORROR--THE TERROR-- THE WANTON DESTRUCTION OF WHICH YOU SPOKE, PRODUCER-SAN.〉

〈IT IS THE SACRED MOUNTAIN RISING UP FROM ITS LONG REST TO RAIN FIRE DOWN ON YOUR MULTIMILLION DOLLAR DESECRATION!〉

〈IT IS THE GODS, STOPPING WHAT I LACKED THE COURAGE TO STOP.〉

BUT IF SANSHIRO SUGATA'S AGED EYES WERE ABLE TO PIERCE THE HAZE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE TOP OF MOUNT KUROISHI, THE OLD MAN WOULD SEE THAT THE FIERY ERUPTION IS NOT THE WORK OF VENGEFUL GODS -- BUT OF NAPALM MISSILES LAUNCHED BY A MAN WHOSE SELF-WILLED MISSION...

...IS TO DESTROY A MONSTER!

ARRHHH! GOLDEN SHIP RAINS FIRE DOWN ON HULK! WHO FLIES GOLDEN SHIP?

WHO IS IT THAT ATTACKS HULK?!

IN THE MIDST OF THE FLAMING FOREST, THE JADE GIANT STANDS PROTECTIVELY OVER THE EMERALD ALTARPIECE.

IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME! EVERYWHERE HULK GOES HE IS HUNTED LIKE SOME WILD ANIMAL--

--AND ATTACKED WITHOUT REASON!

NO, PUNY HUMANS HAVE A REASON! THEY HATE HULK BECAUSE HULK IS DIFFERENT-- GREEN-- STRONG!

TOO STRONG FOR THEM TO EVER DESTROY!

BUT THAT DOES NOT STOP THEM FROM TRYING!

TORN FROM THE MOUNTAINSIDE, THE BROBDINGNAGIAN BOULDER HURTLES SKYWARD, HURLED BY THE MIGHTIEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!

BUT THE GIGANTIC SLAB OF STONE NEVER REACHES ITS TARGET...

VREEE

SONIC PULSATIONS FROM THE HOVERING WAR-WAGON SCREAM OUT--

--AND SHATTER THE MIGHTY MEGALITH INTO SO MANY HARMLESS PEBBLES!

SHRAK

THAT'S IT, BRAIN! HIT THAT HULKING HORROR WITH EVERY WEAPON THE WAR-WAGON'S GOT!

THE HULK IS TOO UNPREDICTABLE FOR AN UNPLANNED ASSAULT TO BE EFFECTIVE, COL. TALBOT.

I MUST STUDY HIS RESPONSE TO A SERIES OF PROGRESSIVELY MORE LETHAL ATTACKS BEFORE I CAN ASCERTAIN WHICH WILL BRING ABOUT HIS DESTRUCTION!

NO! I'LL BROOK NO DELAY! THAT MONSTER'S WREAKED HAVOC ENOUGH! TODAY HE DIES!

SUCH IS MY INTENTION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR PROGRAMMING, COLONEL. BUT...

NO 'BUTS', BRAIN! IF YOU'RE INCAPABLE OF DESTROYING THAT, MONSTER UTTERLY, IRREVOCABLY, AND IMMEDIATELY THEN GET OUT OF THE WAY--

STANDBY

--AND LET ME DO IT MYSELF!

ALL RIGHT! ALL OF THE WAR-WAGON'S FUNCTIONS HAVE BEEN SWITCHED FROM YOUR COMPUTER CONTROL TO MY DIRECT COMMAND VIA THIS ENCEPHALO-HELMET!

I OBJECT MOST STRENUOUSLY, COLONEL. NO HUMAN MIND IS COMPLEX ENOUGH TO MASTER AND MONITOR ALL OF THE WAR-WAGON'S DEFENSE AND FLIGHT FUNCTIONS.

I'LL ONLY NEED DIRECT COMMAND FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES--

--TO FINISH OFF THE HULK!

GOLDEN SHIP ATTACKS HULK AGAIN--SHOOTS MISSILE AT HULK!

HULK DOESN'T KNOW WHO HIS ENEMY IS! HULK DOESN'T CARE! HULK WILL BEAT MISSILE! HULK WILL BEAT GOLDEN SHIP! HULK WILL SMASH HIS FOE! HULK ALWAYS WINS!

THIS IS NO ORDINARY MISSILE! WHEN ITS INCREDIBLY SENSITIVE GUIDANCE SYSTEMS GUAGE THAT IT IS WITHIN A FEW METERS OF ITS TARGET...

...IT ERUPTS AND UNLEASHES A HAIL OF EXPLODING SPHEROIDS BEHIND WHICH THE HULK IS NEARLY LOST FROM VIEW!

FROM HIS ROAR OF PAIN, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE CLUSTER BOMB HAS HURT HIM!

APPARENT, TOO, IS THE FACT THAT THE GREEN GOLIATH IS NOT SO MUCH INJURED, AS ENRAGED!

THE OLD AXIOM, THUS, HOLDS TRUE: THE ANGRIER THE HULK GETS, THE STRONGER HE GETS!

IN THAT, THE HULK IS FORTUNATE, FOR HE WILL NEED ALL THE STRENGTH HE CAN MUSTER MERELY TO SURVIVE THE ASSAULT OF GLENN TALBOT'S WAR-WAGON!

GOLDEN SHIP HAS HURT HULK -- AND TURNED FOREST OF THE GREEN STATUE TO ASHES!

FOR THAT HULK WILL TEAR GOLDEN SHIP APART!

PERHAPS...

...AND THEN AGAIN, PERHAPS NOT!

ZZZRRAM!

HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE WAR-WAGON'S ELECTRICALLY-CHARGED DEFENSIVE SHIELDS STOPS HIM IN MID-LEAP! THE HULK FALLS!

THE ELECTROSHOCK HAS WREAKED HAVOC WITH HIS NERVOUS SYSTEM! HIS MUSCLES SEEM DIVORCED FROM HIS CONTROL!

HE CANNOT BRACE HIMSELF FOR IMPACT! HE CAN DO NOTHING BUT HIT THE EARTH--AND HIT IT HARD!

WROOM!

BUT, EVEN AS THE GREEN GOLIATH'S STRENGTH IS INCALCULABLE, SO TOO ARE HIS RECUPERATIVE POWERS!

GREEN STATUE IS ALL RIGHT?

HULK WAS AFRAID GOLDEN SHIP HAD HURT YOU!

DO NOT BE AFRAID! HULK WILL PROTECT YOU!

MEANWHILE, ABOARD THE WAR-WAGON...

THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF THAT GREEN GROTESQUERY SINCE CONTACT WITH OUR ELECTRO-SHIELDS SLAMMED HIM BACK DOWN TO EARTH!

STILL, HE MUST BE SOMEWHERE ON THE MOUNTAIN'S SLOPE--

--SO I'LL ***BURN*** HIM OUT OF HIDING... EVEN IF IT MEANS I HAVE TO SET THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN AFIRE!

FROOSH!

SEARING FLAMES CHAR THE SACRED SLOPES...

...WHICH NATURE TAKES AS HER CUE TO BEGIN HEAVING THE TERRAIN OF MOUNT KUROISHI FURIOUSLY ABOUT!

〈THE FIRES CONTINUE--AND NOW THE GROUND SHAKES!〉

〈IT IS AN EARTH-QUAKE! THE ANCIENT VOLCANO IS AGAIN COMING TO LIFE!〉

THE FILM CREW FLEES, WISELY FEARING FOR THEIR LIVES, WHILE OTHERS WORRY ONLY ABOUT THEIR WALLETS!

〈BROTHER, THE EARTH-QUAKE IS TEARING OUR TOKYO SET APART!〉

〈AND OUR DRAGON SWAYS!〉

〈IF IT TOPPLES, OUR ENTIRE INVESTMENT WILL BE LOST! WE WILL BE RUINED!〉

SANSHIRO SUGATA CARES NOTHING FOR THE FATE OF TODO PRODUCTIONS' PROPS. THE AGED DIRECTOR'S ONLY CONCERN LIES WITH...

〈THE SACRED SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI! HISTORY RECORDS THAT IT WAS BUILT AFTER THE VOLCANO'S LAST ERUPTION!〉

〈CAN IT HOPE TO SURVIVE THE MOUNTAIN'S RENEWED RAGE?〉

AT THAT MOMENT, ON THE FIERY SUMMIT OF MOUNT KUROISHI, A GREEN-SKINNED GLADIATOR HUDDLES PROTECTIVELY OVER A FRAGILE JADE STATUETTE!

THE GROUND CRACKS, SMOKE HISSES UP FROM BELOW-- BUT HULK WILL NOT LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU, LITTLE GREEN FRIEND!

DO YOU HEAR, PUNY MACHINE? YOU CAN HURT HULK, BURN HULK, ATTACK HULK ALL YOU WANT--

--BUT HULK WILL NOT GIVE IN OR BE DRIVEN AWAY! *THIS IS HULK'S LAST STAND!*

THAT SUITS ME JUST FINE, MONSTER! I ALWAYS KNEW THAT ATTEMPTING TO CAPTURE OR CURE YOU WAS A WASTE OF TIME! ONLY *DEATH* CAN TAME YOUR SAVAGERY!

COL. TALBOT, THOUGH YOU HAVE ASSUMED TOTAL COMMAND OF THE WAR-WAGON, MY SENSORS STILL MONITOR THE SITUATION. I FEAR I MUST WARN YOU THAT YOUR ATTACK UPON THE HULK HAS TRIGGERED THE VOLCANO BELOW. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE IT ERUPTS.

THEN THE HULK'S SITTING ON A POWDER KEG?

GOOD! LET'S KEEP HIM THERE--

--WITH A *SONIC ASSAULT!*

VREEE

*UNAWARE OF THE SENSES-SHATTERING SOUND WAVES BEAMING DOWN AT HIM, THE HULK CONTINUES TO SILENTLY COMMUNE WITH THE EMERALD EFFIGY WITH WHICH HE HAS COME TO FEEL A BOND.*

*IT IS AS IF, WITH SOME DEEP INSTINCT, THE HULK REALIZES THAT THE ANCIENT ICON EMBODIES EVERYTHING FOR WHICH HE HAS EVER LONGED...*

*AND IT APPEARS THOSE LONGINGS MAY NEVER BE REALIZED AS...*

*AARRGGH!* THAT SOUND HURTS HULK'S EARS-- SETS HULK'S BRAIN ON FIRE!

VREEE

*SOUND WAVES, USED IN THIS CASE, TO KILL THE HULK...*

*...WHEREAS, HALF A WORLD AWAY, SOUND HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO RADIO WAVES TO BE BEAMED ACROSS AMERICA WITH THE EXPRESS INTENTION OF **SAVING** THE CREATURE.*

*THE SOURCE OF THESE RADIO SIGNALS LIES BEHIND THE WINDOW IN A TRANSMITTER ROOM OF NEW YORK CITY'S FAMED WORLD TRADE CENTER.*

*A BRASH YOUTH HAS BLUFFED ACCESS TO THE HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT BY FLASHING AN OUT-OF-DATE AVENGERS PRIORITY CARD.*

*NOW, LATE AT NIGHT, RICK JONES' PRERECORDED MESSAGE FLOWS ENDLESSLY OUT INTO THE ETHER. IT HAS DONE SO FOR HOURS...*

...RICK JONES CALLING TEEN BRIGADE... RICK JONES CALLING TEEN BRIGADE...

*...AND THERE HAS BEEN NO RESPONSE.*

UNTIL NOW!
ATLANTA TEEN BRIGADE CALLING RICK JONES--!
HONOLULU TEEN BRIGADE CALLING...!
ESTE ES LOS TEEN BRIGADE DE SAN JUAN!
KENYA TEEN BRIGADE--!
SAN DIEGO TEEN BRIGADE CALLING!
H-HUH?

IT HAS BEEN MANY, MANY YEARS SINCE A YOUNG ORPHAN SENT HIS LONELY CALL OUT OVER THE AIRWAVES, SEARCHING DESPERATELY FOR COMPANIONSHIP. A FEW RESPONED. THEY BECAME THE FIRST **TEEN BRIGADE!**

TIME PASSED--RICK JONES AND HIS FELLOW BRIGADERS GREW OLDER AND DRIFTED APART. IT DIDN'T SEEM THAT, IN THEIR YOUTHFUL EXUBERANCE, THEY HAD ACCOMPLISHED ALL THAT MUCH.

SO RICK FORGOT ABOUT THE TEEN BRIGADE--UNTIL HIS DESIRE TO HELP BRUCE BANNER, THE MAN TRAPPED INSIDE THE HULK...
I HEAR YOU! I HEAR YOU ALL!
...GAVE HIM THE IDEA OF REFORMING THAT LOYAL CORPS OF KIDS, OF FORGING THEM INTO A HELP-THE-HULK NETWORK!

RICK JONES WAS ACUTELY AWARE OF HOW MUCH TIME HAD PASSED, OF HOW QUICKLY THE THINGS OF YOUTH ARE FORGOTTEN...
BUT THERE'S A WHOLE NEW GENERATION OUT THERE, ACHING TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE!

THE OLD TEEN BRIGADE IS GONE, BUT WITH THESE NEW KIDS--
--I'LL FIND YOU AND I'LL HELP YOU, DR. BANNER! I WON'T LET YOU DOWN!
I SWEAR IT!

IF EVER BRUCE BANNER NEEDED HELP, THE MOMENT IS NOW!
ARRRHHH
PAIN-SOUND COMES FROM GOLDEN SHIP! HULK WILL SMASH GOLDEN SHIP AND STOP THE PAIN-SOUND!

AND NOTHING WILL STOP HULK! NOTHING!

THROOM

THE JADE GIANT IS CORRECT! ALTHOUGH THE WAR-WAGON'S ELECTRO-SHIELDS ARE AS POWERFUL AS EVER-- ALTHOUGH THEY SEAR HIM AS PAINFULLY AS BEFORE -- THE INCREDIBLE HULK SMASHES THROUGH THEM TO STRIKE THE BATTLE-CRUISER'S GLEAMING GOLDEN HULL!

GAARHH! I--I FELT SOMETHING... LIKE SOME-ONE SMASHING AT ME PHYSICALLY!

I WARNED YOU, COLONEL! AS LONG AS YOU WEAR THE ENCEPHALO-HELMET, YOU ARE NOT ONLY IN COMMAND OF THE WAR-WAGON-- BUT YOU WILL EMPATHICALLY EXPERIENCE EVERY ASSAULT UPON IT!

THEN THERE WON'T BE ANY FURTHER ASSAULTS UPON THE WAR-WAGON!

THE HULK DIES -- NOW!

POWER TO THE SONIC BEAM IS INCREASED!

THE HULK IS AGAIN HURLED EARTHWARD!

VREEE

SOUND... IS... DRIVING... HULK... MAD!

MAD!

FROOM!

MAD, INDEED! LIKE A WOUNDED ANIMAL IRRATIONALLY BITING AT ITS OWN TAIL, THE HULK IS MINDLESSLY STRIKING OUT AT THE GROUND IN HIS PAIN!

HE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER!

BEWARE, COLONEL. THERE IS A METHOD TO THE MONSTER'S MADNESS.

MAD!

WITTINGLY OR NO, HE STRIKES THE VOLCANO SUMMIT AT THE RIGHT POINT -- WITH SUFFICIENT FORCE -- TO SHATTER THE CONE...

...AND RELEASE THE PENT-UP FURY OF THE ERUPTION WHICH YOUR OWN ASSAULT SET OFF!

YEEARGH

I WARNED YOU, COLONEL TALBOT.

THROUGH THE ENCEPHALO-HELMET'S SENSOR CIRCUITS, *YOU* FEEL WHATEVER THE WAR-WAGON '*FEELS*'.

LAVA, ASH, AND A BLAST OF SUPERHEATED AIR SMITE THE HULL OF THE WAR-WAGON! ITS ELECTRO-SHIELDS, WEAKENED BY THE FORCE OF THE HULK'S ATTACK EARLIER, CAN DO NOTHING TO PREVENT IT!

HIS BRAIN FRIED, GLENN TALBOT CEASES TO COMMAND. BEREFT OF ITS HELMSMAN, THE WAR-WAGON.. DROPS!

YASHROOM

⟨THE SKY IS FALLING!⟩

⟨A COMET HAS STRUCK MOUNT KUROISHI!⟩

⟨IT IS THE END OF THE WORLD!⟩

ONLY SANSHIRO SUGATA DOES NOT FLEE WITH THE REST...

⟨THE VOLCANO POURS ITS LAVA DOWN THE SLOPES! THE SACRED SHRINE LIES DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF THE MOLTEN FLOW!⟩

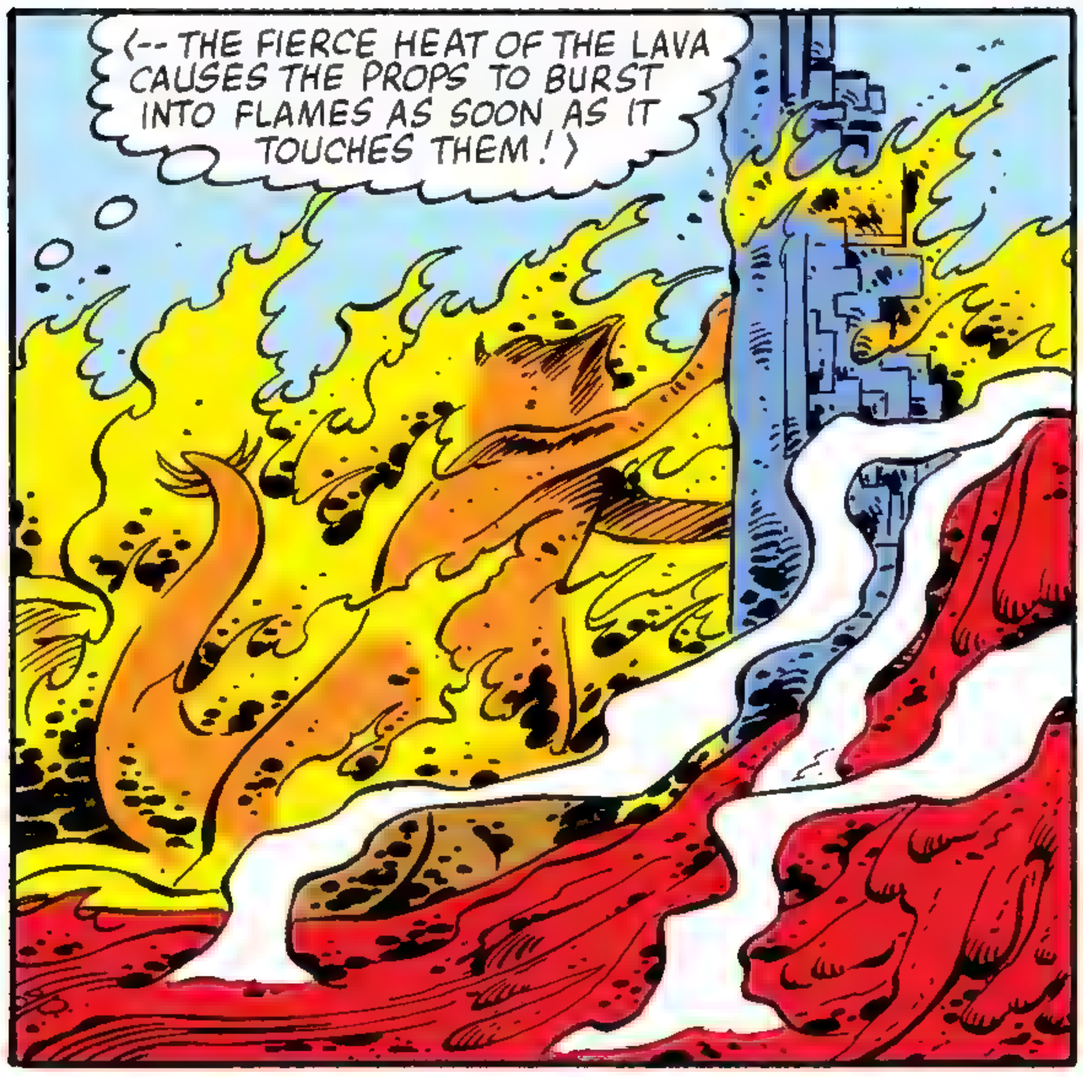
⟨THE SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI MUST NOT PERISH!⟩.

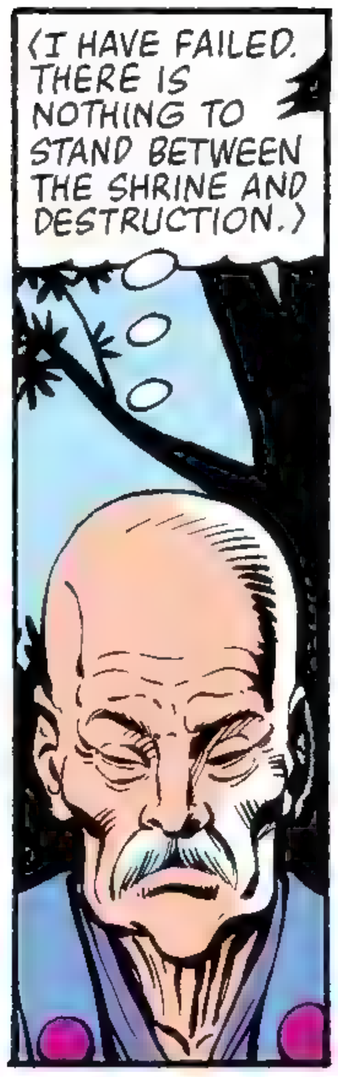
SUGATA REACHES FOR THE MASTER CONTROL PANEL...

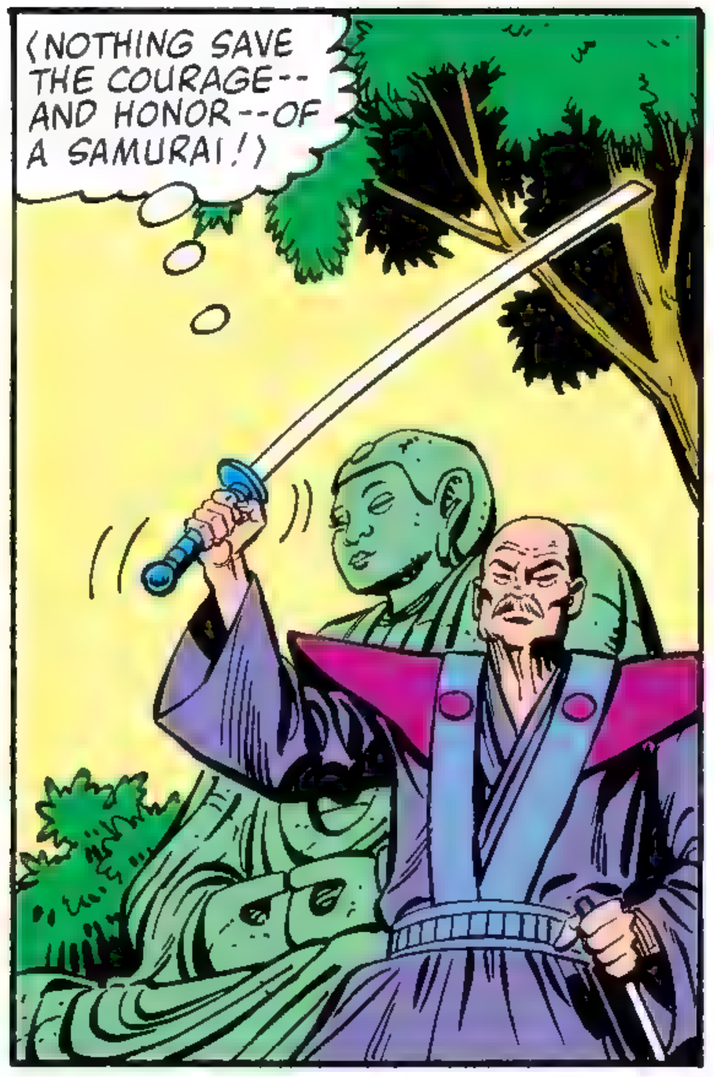
...AND THE HANDS OF AN ARTIST DEFTLY TRANSMIT THE SIGNALS REQUIRED TO MAKE THE MECHANICAL 'DRAGON' MOVE ITS LIMBS--

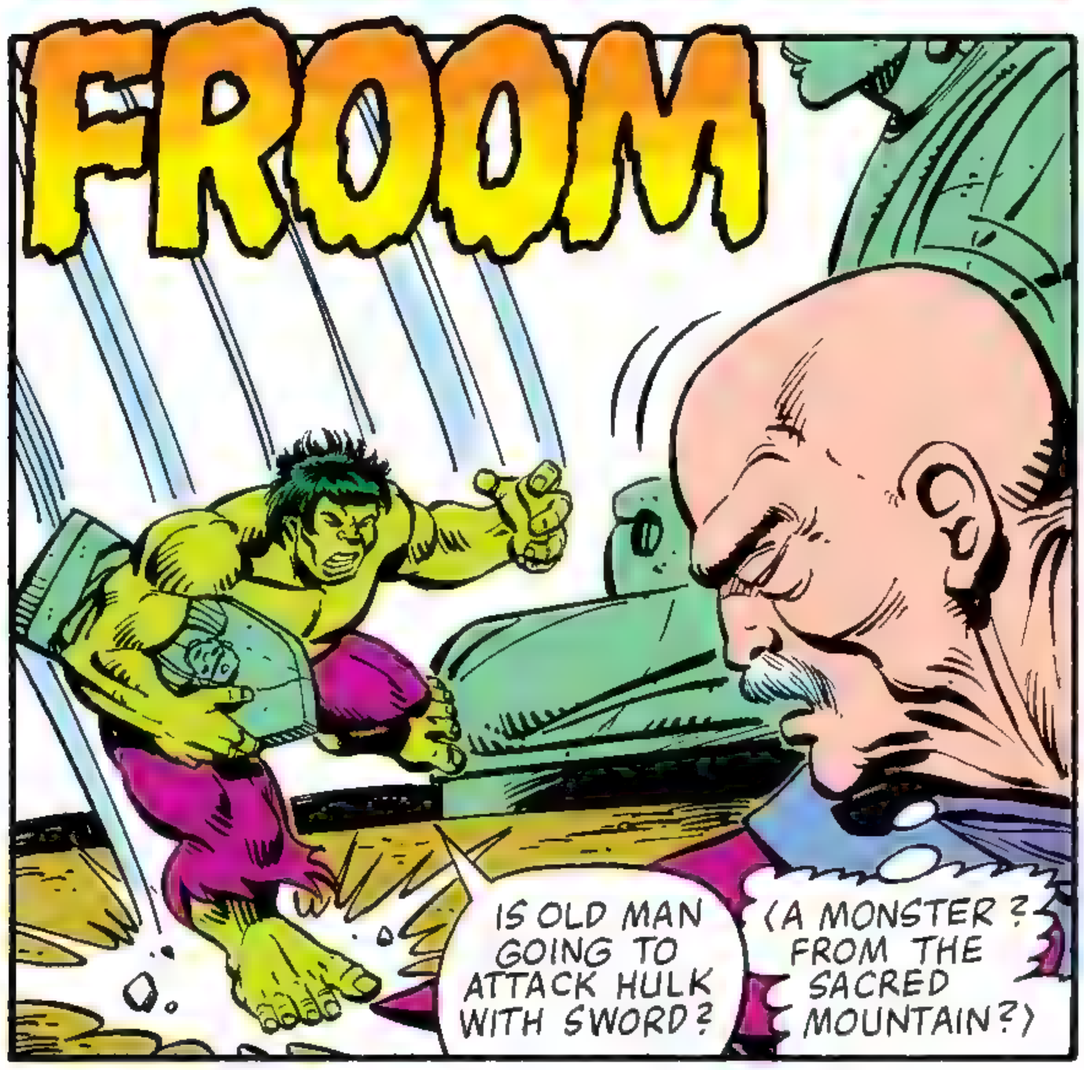
⟨YES! IT IS WORKING! BUT, WAIT--⟩

--AND TILT THE NOW-USELESS SCALE MODEL OF THE CITY OF TOKYO SO THAT IT STANDS AS A BARRIER BETWEEN THE SACRED SHRINE AND THE ENCROACHING LAVA FLOW!

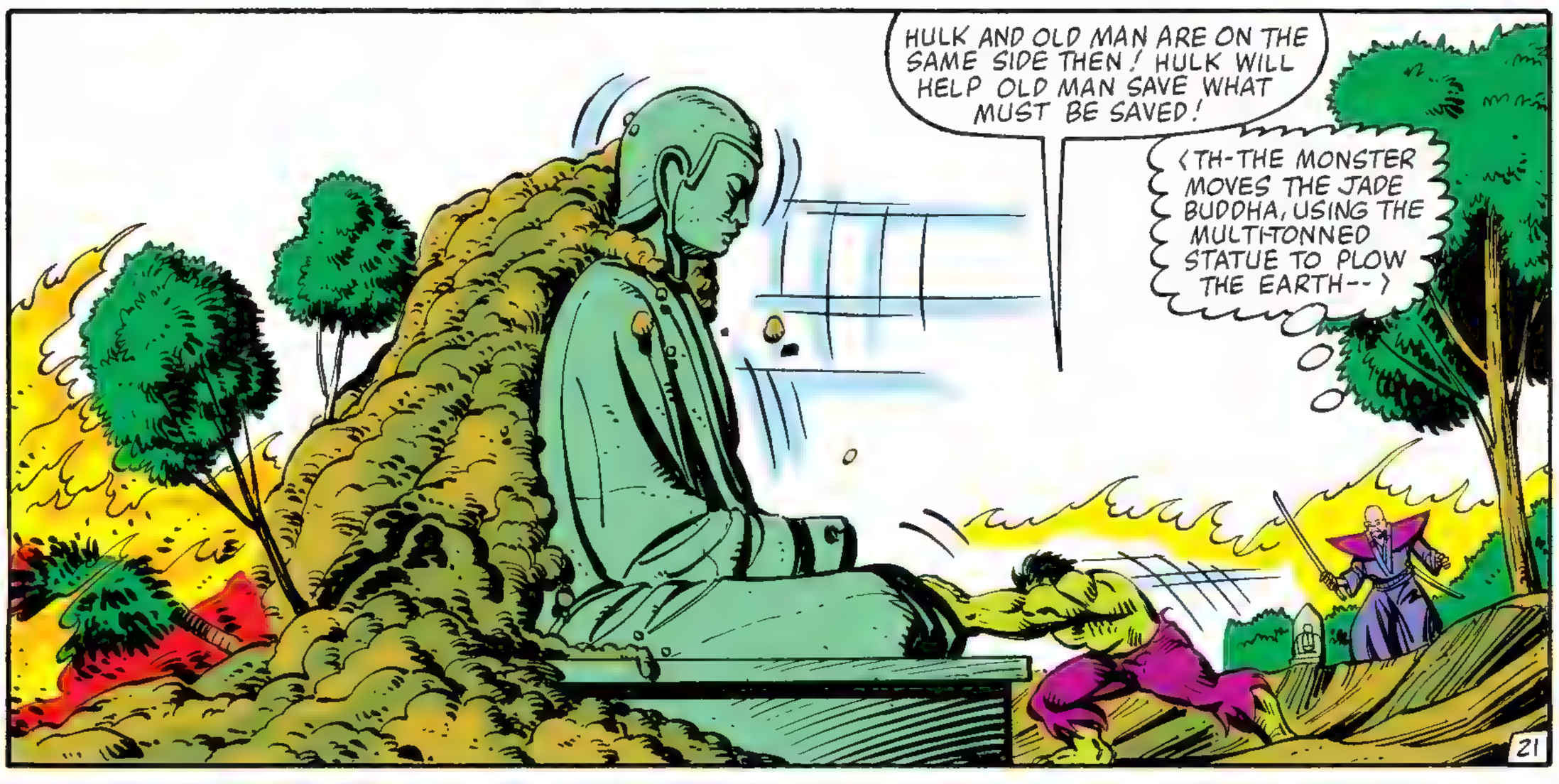

(-- THE FIERCE HEAT OF THE LAVA CAUSES THE PROPS TO BURST INTO FLAMES AS SOON AS IT TOUCHES THEM!)

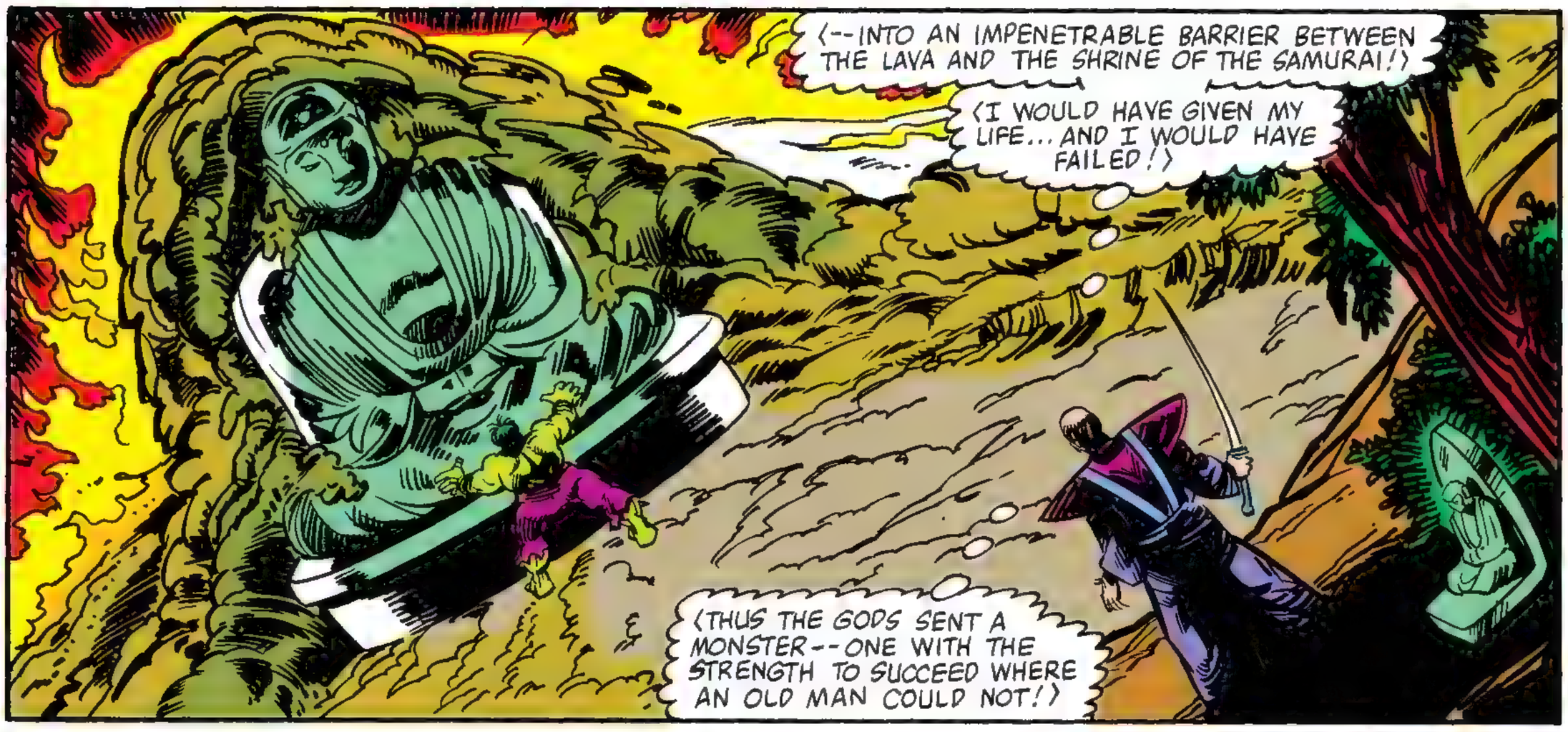

(I HAVE FAILED. THERE IS NOTHING TO STAND BETWEEN THE SHRINE AND DESTRUCTION.)

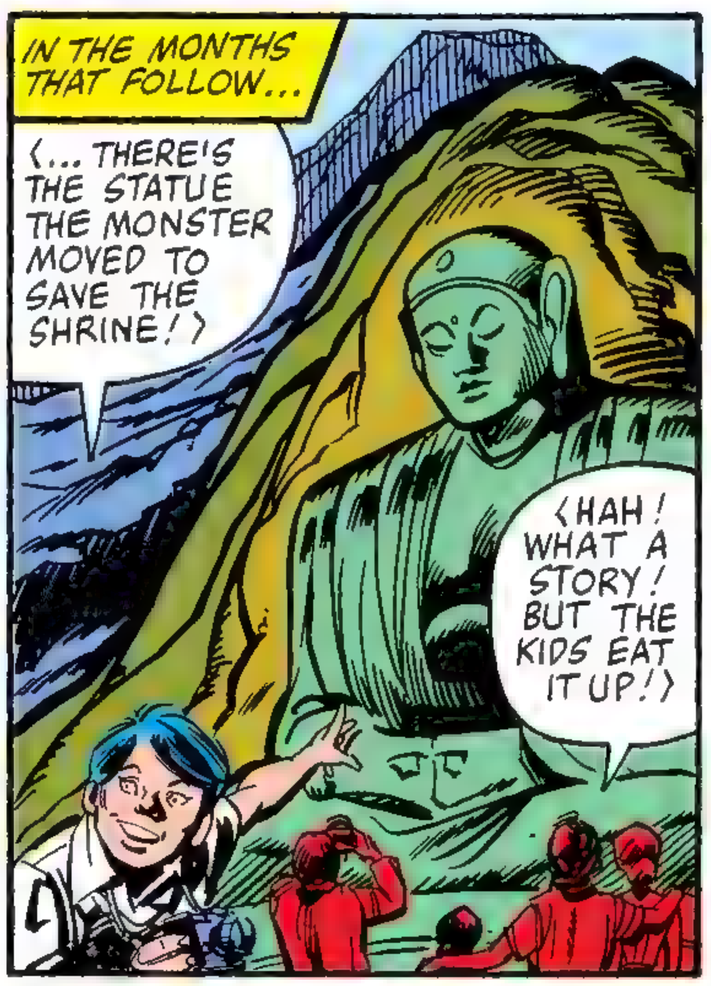

(NOTHING SAVE THE COURAGE-- AND HONOR--OF A SAMURAI!)

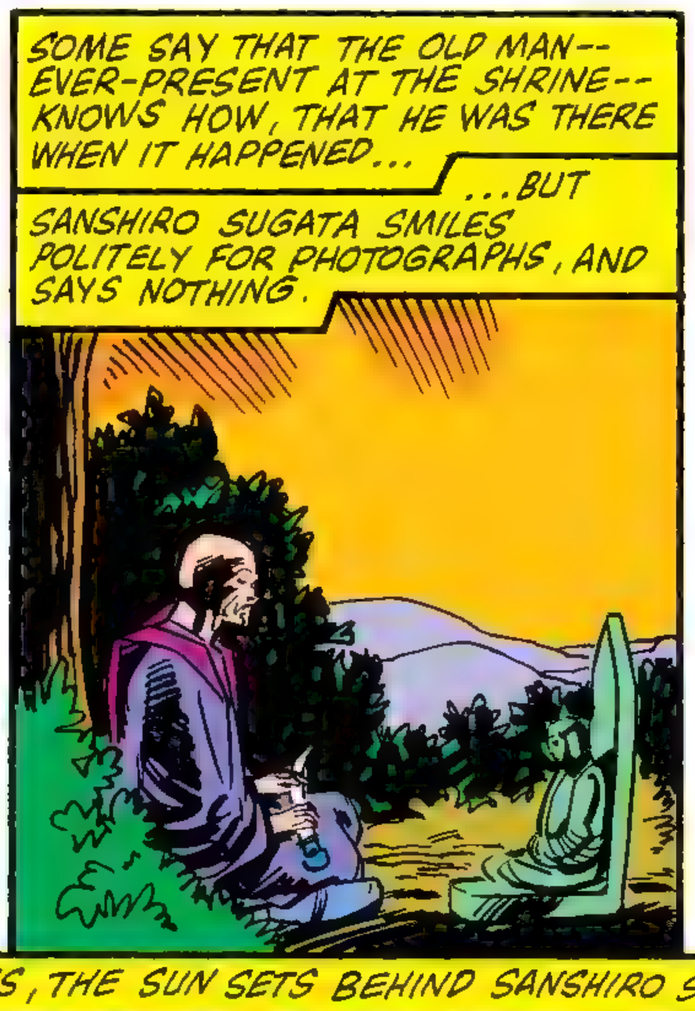

FROOM
IS OLD MAN GOING TO ATTACK HULK WITH SWORD?
(A MONSTER? FROM THE SACRED MOUNTAIN?)

HUNH! NO--OLD MAN IS CRAZY! IT IS NOT HULK HE WANTS TO STOP-- BUT FLAMING RIVER!
OLD MAN TRIES TO DEFEND BIG GREEN STATUE FROM FIRE JUST LIKE HULK TRIED TO PROTECT LITTLE GREEN STATUE!


HULK AND OLD MAN ARE ON THE SAME SIDE THEN! HULK WILL HELP OLD MAN SAVE WHAT MUST BE SAVED!
(TH-THE MONSTER MOVES THE JADE BUDDHA, USING THE MULTI-TONNED STATUE TO PLOW THE EARTH--)







AS HE GOES SERENELY ABOUT HIS DUTIES, THE SUN SETS BEHIND SANSHIRO SUGATA...AND THE SHRINE OF THE SAMURAI.

ANYONE REMEMBER...THE ABSORBING MAN?

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

TM

AGAIN THE ABSORBING MAN!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

BILL MANTLO WRITER / SAL BUSCEMA ARTIST / JIM NOVAK, LETTERS BOB SHAREN, COLORS / ALLEN MILGROM EDITOR / JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FOR HOURS -- NO, FOR DAYS -- MIGHTY MUSCLES HAVE TIRELESSLY PROPELLED THE GREAT, GREEN GOLIATH CALLED THE HULK ACROSS THAT VAST BODY OF WATER KNOWN AS THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

BUT THERE ARE LIMITS TO EVEN THE JADE GIANT'S STRENGTH -- LIMITS WHICH HAVE BEEN ALL BUT REACHED SINCE HIS DEPARTURE FROM JAPAN.

THUS IT IS THAT HIS SALT-STUNG EYES FOCUS GRATEFULLY ON A SMALL LAND MASS RISING FROM THE WAVES.

## ENCOUNTER ON EASTER ISLAND!

LAND! HULK... MUST... REACH... LAND!

A FINAL SURGE OF STRENGTH--

--AND THE JADE JUGGERNAUT ATTAINS HIS GOAL!

HULK IS TIRED OF SWIMMING-- TIRED OF WATER--TIRED OF EVERYTHING!

HULK WILL SLEEP NOW, AND MAYBE WHEN HULK WAKES UP--

--EVERYTHING THAT HAS MADE HULK TIRED WILL BE CHANGED!

GREEN EYELIDS CLOSE OVER EMERALD EYES. THE HULK SLEEPS.

AS HE DOES SO, HIS RESPIRATORY RATE SLOWS--HIS HEART PUMPS LESS BLOOD PER SECOND.

HIS MUSCLES RELAX, SHRINK, ALL BUT DISAPPEAR WHILE THE GREENISH TINGE OF THE HULK'S SKIN...

...GIVES WAY TO THE PINKISH PALLOR OF THE MAN WHO CRUEL FATE HAS CHOSEN TO SHARE HIS EXISTENCE WITH THE MONSTER.

WELCOME BACK TO THE WORLD, DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER.

BUT TO WHAT HEAVEN-FORSAKEN CORNER OF THE WORLD HAS THE HULK BROUGHT HIM THIS TIME? ENORMOUS STATUES DOT THE WINDSWEPT ATOLL, THEIR STERN, STONE FACES TURNED ETERNALLY OUT TO SEA.

WITH EYES SUNK DEEP INTO GRANITE BROWS THESE ANCIENT EFFIGIES BESPEAK MYSTERIES.

WHO MADE THEM? WHO SET THEM IN PLACE? FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

AND WHO IS IT, SKULKING SILENTLY IN THEIR SHADOWS, THAT PEERS FORTH WITH EYES BLAZING MADNESS AT THE EXHAUSTED SCIENTIST?

THE SKULKER'S POWERFUL BUILD WOULD SEEM TO GIVE HIM AN OBVIOUS ADVANTAGE OVER BRUCE BANNER.

STILL, HE HAS SEEN THE SLEEPING SCIENTIST TRANSFORM FROM A MIGHTILY MUSCLED MAN-MONSTER...

... SO HE APPROACHES WITH THE UTMOST CAUTION!

ALIVE! HE'S ALIVE!

I SHOULD KILL HIM BEFORE HE WAKES UP! NO ONE WOULD KNOW!

NO! *THEY* MIGHT KNOW! HE MIGHT BE ONE OF *THEM!*

AND THEN *THEY* MIGHT COME LOOKING FOR HIM ... AND FIND *ME!*

"THEY"?

LET US NOW LOOK WITHIN THIS QUIVERING CREATURE'S MIND...

... BACK TO AN EVENT HE HIMSELF ONLY DIMLY REMEMBERS, FOR AN EXPLANATION OF WHO "THEY" MIGHT BE.

LEMME ALONE, WILLYA, AVENGERS?

JUST GO AWAY!

THAT'S ALL I WANTED TA DO!

YES, CRUSHER CREEL--A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL WHOSE POWER TO TAKE ON THE PROPERTIES OF WHATEVER HE HAPPENS TO TOUCH HAD EARNED HIM THE SOBRIQUET 'ABSORBING MAN'--JUST WANTED TO GET AWAY...

...BUT HE MADE THE MISTAKE OF TRYING TO TAKE AN UNWILLING YOUNG WOMAN WITH HIM, AND OF AROUSING THE IRE OF THE MIGHTY AVENGERS!

HIS NEXT ERROR WAS WHEN HE ABSORBED THE VISION'S ABILITY TO ALTER HIS OWN DENSITY!

UNLIKE THE SCARLET SYNTHEZOID, CRUSHER CREEL COULD NOT CONTROL THE POWER!

HE DROPPED THROUGH THE DOCK AND INTO THE DRINK!

THAT'S IT! I CAN'T TAKE THIS NO MORE! THE FIGHTIN' AIN'T BAD, BUT I CAN'T STAND ALWAYS GETTIN' BEAT! I GOTTA REACH THAT SHIP--GET AWAY FROM HERE!

BUT CRUSHER CREEL WAS WEARY BEYOND WORDS! HE KNEW HE'D NEVER REACH HIS GOAL--

--ESPECIALLY WITH MS. MARVEL BEARING DOWN ON HIM!

I'VE GOT HIM, AVENGERS!

EH?

HE'S TURNED HIMSELF TO WATER AND IS DISPERSING INTO THE OCEAN! WHY?

WHY? WELL, IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME--JUST LETTING GO--LETTING THE OCEAN CURRENTS CARRY HIM!

UNFORTUNATELY, THE EFFORT REQUIRED TO KEEP HIS WATERY MOLECULES FROM DRIFTING IRRETRIEVABLY APART PROVED MORE THAN HIS SIMPLE MIND COULD BEAR!

THUS, AFTER ENDLESS WEEKS OF DRIFTING, IT WAS A PHYSICALLY INTACT--BUT MENTALLY SHATTERED--ABSORBING MAN WHO DRAGGED HIMSELF UP ONTO A SUN-WASHED BEACH!

HE NEITHER KNEW WHERE HE WAS, NOR WHO HE WAS!

NO, ALL HE REALLY KNEW WAS THAT HE HAD COME HERE IN HIS FLIGHT FROM "THEM"...

...AND THAT HE WAS DETERMINED TO KEEP "THEM"-- READ: THESE SUPER-HEROES WHO HAD ALWAYS MADE HIS LIFE MISERABLE-- FROM FINDING HIM!

THIS JERK LOOKS TOO SCRAWNY TA BE ONE OF "THEM"!

SO NO NEED TA KILL HIM...YET! BUT I'LL FEEL BETTER TAKIN' HIM WHERE I CAN KEEP AN EYE ON HIM!

EFFORTLESSLY SHOULDERING THE SLEEPING SCIENTIST, THE AMNESIAC ABSORBING MAN STALKS OFF!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, IT IS NIGHT OVER NEW YORK.

HOTEL

FROM A WINDOW IN A TIMES SQUARE HOTEL COMES-- NOT THE LOW WHISPERS OF LOVERS--NOR THE GROANS OF THE HUNG-OVER...

...BUT AN INCESSANT KNOCKING AND THE STATIC HISS OF A RADIO TRANSMITTER.

KNOCK KNOCK

RICK JONES CALLING TEEN BRIGADE...

ROUTINE CHECK, GANG, TO SEE WHETHER ANYONE'S HEARD ANY NEWS OF THE HULK?

TOTALLY ABSORBED WITH THE INFORMATION FLOODING INTO HIS HEADPHONES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD...

CLACK

...RICK JONES IS AS OBLIVIOUS TO THE SOUND OF A KEY TURNING IN THE LOCK OF HIS SUITE DOOR, AS HE WAS TO THE KNOCKING SECONDS BEFORE.

I'M SORRY I HAD TO USE MY PASS-KEY, MR. JONES, BUT...

HE CAN'T HEAR YOU-- NOT WITH THOSE HEADPHONES ON.

BUT SOMETHING ALERTS RICK JONES TO THE FACT THAT HE IS NO LONGER ALONE.

BETTY!

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN, RICK?

WHAT? I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

OH, SORRY-- I FORGOT I WAS WEARING THESE.

I SHOULD SAY SO!

HRRMPH!

WHEN THE MANAGER HAS GONE, RICK EXCITEDLY FILLS HIS OLD FRIEND BETTY ROSS IN ON HIS ACTIVITIES SINCE LAST THEY SAW EACH OTHER.

I GOT A PROMISE OUT OF THE AVENGERS THAT THEY'D HELP THE HULK ONCE HE'S BEEN FOUND, SO I FORMED A NEW ***TEEN BRIGADE*** TO HELP LOCATE HIM.

YOU WERE HEAD OF THE TEEN BRIGADE SHORTLY AFTER BRUCE BECAME THE HULK, WEREN'T YOU, RICK?

YEAH! IT STARTED OUT AS A BUNCH OF KIDS WHO DUG HAM-RADIOES! BUT THIS NEW GROUP HAILS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD!

LOOK! THEY'VE ALREADY SPOTTED THE HULK IN THESE PLACES!

ISRAEL, EGYPT, AFGHANISTAN, THE SOVIET UNION, AND JAPAN...

I CAN CONFIRM THAT LAST SIGHTING. MY... EX-HUSBAND APPARENTLY PURSUED THE HULK AND GOADED HIM INTO BATTLE ATOP A DORMANT VOLCANO.

GLENN WAS PILOTING A BATTLE-CRUISER CALLED THE 'WAR WAGON' WHICH HE'D HIJACKED FROM GAMMA BASE.

GLENN'S BODY WAS FOUND IN THE WRECKAGE.

I-I'M SORRY, BETTY!

I AM TOO. IT WAS SUCH A USELESS DEATH. IF ONLY HE'D UNDERSTOOD -- AS YOU AND I DO -- THAT THE HULK IS ONLY MONSTROUS WHEN PROVOKED... THAT ALL HE WANTS IS TO BE LEFT ALONE.

YOU STILL LOVE BRUCE BANNER, DON'T YOU?

I'VE NEVER *STOPPED* LOVING HIM, RICK.

BUT *HOW* DO YOU LOVE SOMEONE WHO SPENDS HALF HIS EXISTENCE TRAPPED WITHIN THE MOST SAVAGE CREATURE EVER TO WALK THE EARTH?

IT'S HARD -- AS HARD AS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO BE A *FRIEND* TO THE DOC...

...WHEN THE HULK DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THAT HE AND BRUCE BANNER ARE ONE AND THE SAME!

BUT I'M COMMITTED TO FINDING THAT GREEN GOLIATH -- AND TO HELPING BRUCE BANNER FIND A CURE FOR HIS CONDITION...

...A CONDITION WHICH AFFLICTED HIM BECAUSE HE THREW ME OUT OF THE WAY OF AN EXPLODING GAMMA BOMB AND ABSORBED ALL THAT RADIATION HIMSELF SO MANY YEARS AGO!

STICK WITH ME, BETTY! WHEN I FIND HIM, THE HULK WILL NEED ALL THE FRIENDS HE CAN GET!

RICK JONES CALLING THE TEEN BRIGADE! HULK LAST SEEN HEADING DUE EAST FROM JAPAN...

EVEN AS THE SEARCH GOES ON, A FRIGHTENED ABSORBING MAN TRIES TO HOLD ON TO HIS SENSELESS PRISONER AND NEGOTIATE A SANDY SLOPE AT THE SAME TIME!

GOT TO GET BACK TO THE HIDEOUT! SPENT TOO MUCH TIME OUT IN THE SUN ALREADY! CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE ON "THEM" SPOTTIN' ME!

BE IT THE MUTTERING OF HIS ABDUCTOR, OR THE FEELING OF BEING BOUNCED AGAINST A BROAD BACK...

...SOMETHING WAKES BRUCE BANNER UP!

WHERE IN BLAZES--? SOME KIND OF STONE QUARRY?

AND SOMEONE-- OR SOMETHING-- IS CARRYING ME!

BANNER SHIFTS HIS WEIGHT.

THE ABSORBING MAN LOSES HIS FOOTING.

BOTH FALL.

UNNH! I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO ATTEMPT TO FIGURE THIS OUT! I COULD BE ANYWHERE!

AND WHOEVER WAS CARRYING ME COULD BE A *FRIEND* OF MY GREEN-SKINNED ALTER-EGO -- OR A *FOE!*

I DON'T THINK I WANT TO STICK AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO MEET EITHER!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, SQUIRT!

ON THE OTHER HAND, DO I HAVE ANY CHOICE?

YOU'RE *MINE!* I FOUND YOU-- AN' I AIN'T LETTIN' YOU GET AWAY TA FETCH "THEM" AFTER ME!

GOOD LORD! YOU SIMPLY REACHED OUT AND TOUCHED THAT STATUE--

--AND YOUR BODY'S BECOME *STONE!*

THE GRANITE GARGOYLE IN FRONT OF HIM MAKES NO REPLY, BUT FROM THE INSANE LOOK IN HIS EYES...

...BRUCE BANNER REALIZES THAT HIS SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO KEEP HIS MOUTH SHUT, AND DO AS HIS CAPTOR SAYS!

Y-YOU DON'T HAVE ANY-THING TO FEAR FROM ME! I'M NOT ONE OF "THEM"--

--WHOEVER "THEY" ARE!

NO, NOT NOW YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE OF "THEM" -- BUT I SAW YOU CHANGE! YOU GOT POWERS LIKE "THEY" DO!

CHANGE? HE MUST HAVE SEEN ME TRANSFORM FROM THE HULK TO BRUCE BANNER.

W-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME?

HIDE YOU -- IN CASE "THEY" COME LOOKIN' FOR YOU -- IN THE CAVE!

CAVE? THAT OPENING DOESN'T LOOK BIG ENOUGH TO BE A GOPHER HOLE!

GO IN!

THE THREAT OF A GRANITE FIST CONVINCES HIM TO OBEY, AND BRUCE BANNER FORCES HIMSELF INTO THE IMPOSSIBLY SMALL OPENING.

AS HE DOES, THE ENTIRE WEIGHT OF THE ISLAND SEEMS TO BEAR DOWN ON HIM.

OUTSIDE, THE ABSORBING MAN QUICKLY SCANS HIS SURROUNDINGS.

GOOD! NO SIGN OF "THEM"!

I GOT THE SQUIRT OUTTA SIGHT BEFORE "THEY" SPOTTED US!

NOW I JUST GOTTA KEEP HIM THAT WAY!

LIKE A SCARED RABBIT SEEKING SANCTUARY IN ITS WARREN, THE ABSORBING MAN CRAWLS GRATEFULLY BACK INTO THE DARK!

IMAGINE, IF YOU WILL, CRAWLING DOWN INTO BLACKNESS -- UNABLE TO RISE EVEN TO YOUR HANDS AND KNEES -- COLD STONE MERE MILLIMETERS ABOVE YOUR BACK! IMAGINE BEING UNABLE TO TURN, NOT EVEN TO SEE WHAT IS BEHIND YOU!

IMAGINE THE DANK, EARTH-LADEN AIR YOU ARE FORCED TO BREATHE -- YOUR FACE BEING PRESSED SO FAR DOWN INTO THE MUD THAT YOU CAN DRAW NO BREATH AT ALL.

NOW IMAGINE THE TERROR OVERWHELMING DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, AS HE CLAWS WITH FINGERS AND TOES, FORCED EVER ONWARD --

--AFRAID, MOST OF WHAT MIGHT SOON TAKE PLACE!

HEART'S STARTING TO POUND-- PULSE IS BEGINNING TO RACE! DEAR GOD, DON'T LET ME CHANGE INTO THE HULK NOW!

NOT HERE!

I'M SQUEEZING THROUGH BECAUSE I'M SLIGHT OF BUILD! MY CAPTOR'S ACHIEVING THE SAME END--AS FAR AS I CAN TELL -- BY ABSORBING THE PROPERTIES OF THIS MUD AND FLOWING BEHIND ME!

BUT THE HULK IS MORE MASSIVE! IF I CHANGE NOW, HE MIGHT BECOME WEDGED IN THE TUNNEL, UNABLE TO MOVE, UNABLE TO FREE HIMSELF --

-- HIS VERY ANGER TRAPPING US AND DOOMING US BOTH TO SLOW STARVATION OR ASPHYXIATION!

THEN...

OH, NO! WATER! THE TUNNEL IS FLOODED!

KEEP MOVIN', SQUIRT!

I--I CAN'T! THERE'S WATER AHEAD--NOWHERE TO GO-- NO WAY TO TURN BACK!

I SAID, KEEP MOVIN'!

THE ABSORBING MAN PUSHES FROM BEHIND.

THE COLD WATER ACTS LIKE A SLAP ACROSS BRUCE BANNER'S FACE, SHOCKING HIM OUT OF HIS PANIC.

IT IS THEN THAT HE REALIZES THAT THERE IS SUDDENLY ROOM ABOUT HIM TO FLAIL HIS HANDS AND FEET.

CALL IT SWIMMING, IF YOU WILL...

...BUT IT IS NOWHERE NEAR SO CONSCIOUS AN ACT.

RATHER, IT IS THE LAST SUPREME EFFORT OF A VERY FRIGHTENED HUMAN BEING, THAT PROPELS DR. BANNER TOWARDS THE SURFACE, AIR AND LIFE.

THERE'S LIGHT DOWN HERE-- A FIRE, ILLUMINATING A CAVE!

MY CAVE!

HIDDEN DEEP DOWN IN THE DARK AND THE ROCK!

SO THAT "THEY" WILL NEVER FIND ME!

LATER...

WHOEVER MY BROODING CAPTOR IS, HE'S INCREDIBLE!

HE KEEPS THE FIRE GOING BY TAKING ITS PROPERTIES ONTO HIMSELF AND IGNITING BITS OF STICKS. HE'S LITERALLY AN "ABSORBING MAN."

BY BECOMING STONE, OR WATER, OR WOOD, HE COULD PROBABLY LIVE DOWN HERE INDEFINITELY WITHOUT DANGER OF STARVING. I CAN'T.

YET, EVEN WERE I TO ESCAPE HIM, THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN! I KNOW WHERE I AM-- THOSE STATUES ON THE SURFACE COULD ONLY BE THE FAMOUS ICONS OF EASTER ISLAND THAT I READ ABOUT IN THOR HEYERDAHL'S CLASSIC BOOK, "AKU AKU".

HAVING NOTHING BUT TIME ON HIS HANDS, BRUCE BANNER TRIES TO REMEMBER WHAT HE LEARNED FROM THE FAMOUS EXPLORER'S BOOK.

HEYERDAHL THEORIZED THAT THE ORIGINAL EASTER ISLANDERS CAME WESTWARD FROM SOUTH AMERICA. LEGEND HAS IT THAT THEY WERE WHITE-SKINNED, WITH EAR LOBES EXTENDED IN THE MANNER OF THE INCAS,

ONCE SETTLED, THEY SET TO CARVING GIANT IMAGES OUT OF STONE.

THEIR WORK WAS CUT SHORT, HOWEVER, BY AN INVASION. THE LONG-EARS RESISTED...

...BUT WERE SLAUGHTERED, ALMOST TO A MAN, THROWN SCREAMING INTO A HUGE FIERY PIT.

A FEW WOMEN AND CHILDREN MANAGED TO HIDE OUT IN THE ISLAND'S SYSTEM OF UNDERGROUND VOLCANIC GAS TUNNELS -- SUCH AS THIS ONE -- BUT FEW SURVIVED LATER VISITS BY SPANISH MISSIONARIES WHO BROUGHT BOTH DELIVERANCE -- AND DISEASE -- TO EASTER ISLAND.

THERE IS STILL A SMALL COMMUNITY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND--

--BUT, EVEN WERE I TO REACH THEM, EASTER ISLAND IS ONLY VISITED BY SHIP ONCE A YEAR.

HOW LONG WOULD IT BE BEFORE MY CAPTOR FOUND ME? WHO COULD RESIST IF HE DID?

STILL, I MUST ATTEMPT AN ESCAPE! I HAVE TO GET OUT WHILE HE'S ASLEEP! BUT ESCAPE MEANS GOING BACK--

--IN THERE!

SOON...

HE'S BEEN ASLEEP FOR AT LEAST AN HOUR! IF I'M TO ATTEMPT AN ESCAPE, IT MUST BE NOW!

I-I'VE NEVER BEEN SO SCARED IN MY LIFE-- NOT EVEN WHEN I WAS CAUGHT IN THAT GAMMA BOMB EXPLOSION THAT IRRADIATED MY CELLS, CAUSING ME TO BECOME THE HULK WHENEVER MY EMOTIONS RUN WILD.

THE WONDER OF IT IS-- DESPITE MY TERROR-- I HAVEN'T TURNED INTO THE HULK YET!

I'VE MANAGED TO CONTROL THE CHANGE, KNOWING THAT MY ONLY HOPE OF ESCAPE LIES IN SQUEEZING THROUGH THIS SECOND TUNNEL LEADING OUT OF THE CAVE--

--AN ACT ONLY SKINNY BRUCE BANNER... AND NOT THE MAMMOTH HULK... CAN HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH!

AGAIN, FRIGHTENED FINGERS CLAW FORWARD INTO THE DARKNESS. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER CLOSES HIS EYES, CLENCHES HIS TEETH... AND PRAYS...

PLEASE LET THE END BE NEAR!

PLEASE LET ME REACH THE SURFACE SOON!

THEN, AS IF IN MOCKING ANSWER TO DR. BANNER'S DESPERATE PRAYERS...

THE TUNNEL'S NARROWED! I-I CAN'T MOVE FORWARD! I'M STUCK!

A-AND SOMETHING'S GRABBED HOLD OF MY ANKLES!

NOT SOMETHIN', SQUIRT--SOMEONE! I KNEW YA WAS ONE OF "THEM", BUT YA AIN'T GONNA GET AWAY TA WARN "THEM" I'M HERE! IN FACT, I THINK WE'LL JUST STAY RIGHT WHERE WE ARE... UNTIL YA STARVE!

IT IS AT THIS MOMENT THAT THE SUPREME ACT OF WILL THAT KEPT BRUCE BANNER'S EMOTIONS IN CHECK, GIVES WAY.

ST-STUCK IN THE DARK! STONE PRESSING DOWN ALL AROUND ME!

NO!

KRRKKK-

SKOOOM!

I KNEW IT! I KNEW YA HADDA BE ONE OF "THEM"! ONLY SOMEONE LIKE "THEM" HAS THE POWER TA PUNCH THROUGH TONS OF SOLID ROCK TA FREEDOM!

THE HULK IS NOT LIKE *ANYONE*, MUD-MAN! HULK HAS MORE POWER THAN ANYONE -- POWER TO DO ANYTHING HULK WANTS! HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

HULK? YEAH, NOW I REMEMBER! YOU *ARE* ONE OF "THEM"!

ONE OF THE SUPER-FREAKS I KEPT FIGHTIN'--

"--AN' WHO KEPT BEATIN' ME...

"...AN' BEATIN' ME...

"...AN' BEATIN' ME!"

NOW I REMEMBER WHO I AM! I'M THE *ABSORBING MAN*, A DUDE WHO SHOULD BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TA BEAT *ANY-BODY*-- BY ABSORBIN' THEIR POWERS AN' USIN' 'EM AGAINST THEM!

BUT I KEPT GETTIN' BEAT SO BAD THAT I FINALLY LOST ALL MY MARBLES AN' WOUND UP HERE, COWERIN' IN THE DARK, SURE THAT "THEY" WAS AFTER ME!

SPK

KOW!

WELL, GREENSKIN, GIVE THE REST OF "THEM" A MESSAGE! TELL "THEM"...

DON'T BUG THE ABSORBING MAN!

MUD-MAN HAS BECOME STONE-MAN! HIS PUNCHES HURT HULK!

WAIT'LL I ABSORB YOUR POWER, MAN-MONSTER!

NO ONE CAN HAVE HULK'S POWER BUT HULK!

OH, YEAH? AN' HOW YA GONNA STOP ME FROM TAKIN' IT, GREENIE?

BY LOBBIN' CHUNKS OF THE ISLAND AT ME?

I'LL JUST ABSORB WHATEVER YA CHUCK AT ME AN' ADD IT TA MY MASS! STONE! EARTH! GRASS!

I'M ALREADY TWICE AS BIG AS YOU!

AN', WHEN I TOUCH YA, I'LL BE ALL THAT, AN' STRONGER BESIDES!

THEN BIG MAN WILL *NOT* TOUCH HULK!

THE TREE TRUNK THE HULK GRABS HAD ONCE BEEN USED TO LEVER THE EASTER ISLAND STATUES INTO AN UPRIGHT POSITION.

IT SERVES, HOWEVER, AS AN ADMIRABLE "LOUISVILLE SLUGGER"!

KATHRAM

STUPID! ALL I HADDA DO WAS LET THE TREE TOUCH ME AN' NOW I'VE ADDED WOOD TA MY MASS, TOO!

THE WAY I'M GOIN', I DON'T EVEN HAVE TA ABSORB YER POWER, HULK!

THE WAY HIS BLOW SENDS THE GREEN GOLIATH HURTLING THROUGH THE AIR, IT SEEMS THE ABSORBING MAN'S ASSESSMENT OF HIS POWERS AND ABILITIES IS ALL TOO CORRECT!

SPLOOSH

HOW DO YOU WANNA CROAK, HULK? BEAT TO A PULP--OR DROWNED IN SOME STINKIN' POND HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM NOWHERE?

NOT THAT YA HAVE MUCH CHOICE! THE DECISION'S MINE!

NO! HULK HAS FOUGHT BIGGER FOES THAN ABSORBING MAN!

HULK WILL WIN EVEN IF YOU ABSORB WHOLE ISLAND!

THWAM!

ABSORB A WHOLE ISLAND?

I NEVER THOUGHTA THAT!

HAH! YOU JUST GAVE ME THE IDEA OF THE CENTURY!

HULK DOESN'T KNOW WHAT ABSORBING MAN IS TALKING ABOUT!

NO! YOU WOULDN'T! THE WAY I HEAR IT, YOU AIN'T GOT THE BRAINS OF A POP-CORN KERNEL!

ME, I AIN'T TOO SWIFT ON THE SMARTS MYSELF, BUT I CAN SEE THE POSSIBILITIES!

FIRST, I SOAK UP EVERYTHIN' THAT GOES INTA COMPOSIN' AN ISLAND-- RIGHT DOWN TO THE MOLTEN CENTER OF THE EARTH!

"THEN, BIGGER'N THE BIGGEST BATTLESHIP, I SET OUT ACROSS THE PACIFIC OCEAN--ABSORBIN' TIDAL POWER AN' WHATEVER ELSE THAT PUDDLE OF WATER'S GOT TA OFFER...

"... UNTIL I REACH AMERICA AN' ABSORB THE GEOLOGY OF THE WHOLE, BLAMED CONTINENT! TELL ME, HULK, HOW DO YOU THINK THE AVENGERS ARE GONNA FIGHT A GUY WHO'S ABSORBED HALF THE FREAKIN' GLOBE?!"

DO YA SEE IT YET, YA DIMWITTED APE? ME, CRUSHER CREEL, THE ABSORBIN' MAN--

I'M GONNA BE THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

IF THERE IS ONE THING YOU DO NOT SAY TO THE INCREDIBLE HULK...

GRAARR!

...IT'S THAT!

FWOOM!

THIS SEEMS AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY FOR A DESCRIPTION OF A LEVER, AS: A BAR (THE EASTER ISLAND STATUE) SUPPORTED AT SOME STATIONARY POINT ALONG ITS LENGTH (THE STONE OVER WHICH IT HAD FALLEN) AND USED TO OVERCOME RESISTANCE (THE ABSORBING MAN) AT A SECOND POINT, BY APPLICATION OF FORCE (THE HULK) AT A THIRD POINT.

IN SHORT, THE ABSORBING MAN -- DESPITE HIS GREATLY INCREASED SIZE AND MASS ...

...IS SENT FLYING!

NOW, REMEMBER: THE ABSORBING MAN HAD BEGUN TO ABSORB THE QUALITIES OF EASTER ISLAND UNTO HIMSELF...

... THE STONE, THE EARTH, THE VOLCANIC CORE.

THE SHOCK OF HAVING HIS MASS MOVED MUST BE AKIN TO WHAT THE EARTH UNDERGOES WHEN EXPERIENCING A MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE. THAT--

--PLUS LOSING THIS BATTLE NOW, JUST AS HE HAD IMAGINED HIMSELF TRIUMPHANT, IS MORE THAN HIS MIND CAN BEAR.

IT HAS NOT BEEN LONG SINCE THE ABSORBING MAN REGAINED A RATHER TENUOUS GRIP ON HIS SANITY.

HE GOES INERT, COMATOSE, AND LETS THE WAVES LAP OVER HIM--

--DISPROVING THE ADAGE THAT: "NO MAN IS AN ISLAND."

HUNH! ABSORBING MAN IS GONE -- DRIFTING AWAY WITH THE TIDE! HULK IS ALL ALONE AGAIN!

HULK WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE, SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY FROM PUNY HUMANS!

NOW HULK HAS WHAT HE WANTS -- BUT IT IS SO QUIET HERE.

MAYBE HULK WILL THINK ABOUT WHAT HULK WANTS AND CHANGE HIS MIND ...TOMORROW.

NEXT ISSUE: TWO TALES OF TERROR... PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES SHOULDN'T HURT HULKS! AND FOUNDLING! SOMETHING NEW FROM THE HOUSE OF IDEAS!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES...

MILGROM

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

**STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®**

BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA
WRITER / STORYTELLERS / ARTIST

JIM NOVAK
LETTERS

BEN SEAN
COLORS

AL MILGROM
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ON A LONELY MALIBU BEACH-FRONT, A STRANGE LESSON WILL BE LEARNED...

# PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES SHOULDN'T HURT HULKS!

GRRRRR

YES, SNOWSTAR -- I SEE HIM. A MAN, WASHED UP UPON OUR BEACH. IS HE ALIVE OR DEAD, DO YOU THINK?

SHALL WE SEE?

THE WOMAN IN WHITE REGARDS BRUCE BANNER WITH ALABASTER EYES.

HER PET SNARLS, IVORY FANGS AGAINST A MILK-WHITE TONGUE.

THE TIDE BEGINS TO COME IN. SOON THIS BEACH WILL BE SUB-MERGED.

SLENDER FINGERS IN COLORLESS GLOVES CHECK A FEEBLE PULSE.

HE IS ALIVE, SNOWSTAR... BARELY.

WE MUST GET HIM TO THE HOUSE.

BUT FIRST...

KOFF! KOFF!

GRRRR

SILENCE, SNOWSTAR.

WH-WHERE AM I?

MALIBU. ABOUT 40 MILES NORTH OF LOS ANGELES.

THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE. YOU ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL...

YES, I AM.

LATER...

INTERESTING DECOR. EVERYTHING THAT ISN'T GLASS, IS WHITE...

...INCLUDING THOSE CLOTHES THAT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SET OUT FOR ME.

SOMEHOW I KNOW THEY'RE PRECISELY MY SIZE.

THEY ARE.

I TRUST THEY ARE TO YOUR LIKING?

VERY CALIFORNIA. THAT'S WHERE I AM, IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY FROM LAST NIGHT.

FORGIVE ME, BUT YOUR *NAME* SEEMS TO HAVE SLIPPED MY MIND...

I NEVER TOLD IT TO YOU. I AM... GLAZIER!

THIS IS SNOW-STAR.

YOU ARE IN OUR HOUSE.

AND WE ARE VERY GLAD TO HAVE YOU. VERY GLAD, INDEED.

THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE HOUSE. ARE YOU AN ARCHITECT?

I AM AN ARTIST.

MY MEDIUM IS GLASS.

...AND MY SUBJECT IS -- MEN!

THERE, IN MY GALLERY, YOU MAY SEE SOME OF MY SCULPTURES.

I'M AWED! THEY'RE SO EXACT! SO LIFELIKE!

YES, THEY ARE. COME, WOULD YOU LIKE A CLOSER LOOK?

VERY MUCH INDEED. YOUR ARTWORK FASCINATES ME--

--ALMOST AS MUCH AS YOU DO.

YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ME, AND YET YOU SAVED MY LIFE AND ALLOWED ME INTO YOUR HOME. WHY?

YOU WERE A MAN, IN TROUBLE--

--AND I COLLECT *MEN.*

AS SUBJECTS FOR MY SCULPTURES, OF COURSE.

THAT SWIMMER, SUBMERGED BENEATH THE GLAZEN SURFACE OF THE POOL...

I-I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH HORROR IN A HUMAN FACE!

THERE ARE MANY MEN HERE-- SPORTSMEN, RICH MEN, FAMOUS MEN -- BUT I HAVE NEVER HAD A FUGITIVE ***PHYSICIST*** TO ADD TO MY COLLECTION BEFORE...

...DR. BANNER.

Y-YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

***WHO*** YOU ARE, AND ***WHAT*** YOU ARE. BUT I DID NOT SAVE YOUR LIFE TO TURN YOU OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES.

NO, I SAVED YOU IN THE HOPE THAT YOU MIGHT LET ME DO YOUR LIKENESS IN GLASS--

--THAT I MIGHT HOLD YOU HERE... FOREVER.

*HE CANNOT RESIST. HE CAN THINK OF NO REASON WHY HE SHOULD WANT TO.*

THIRTY DAYS LATER...

I'VE BEEN HERE A MONTH ALREADY--

--AND I'M BORED!

THAT'S IRRATIONAL. AS THE MAN WHO BECOMES THE HULK, OUTSIDE OF THIS HOUSE, I'D BE HOUNDED AND HUNTED. HERE, I'M SAFE.

I'VE AGREED TO STAY UNTIL GLAZIER DOES MY SCULPTURE--

--BUT SHE HASN'T EVEN STARTED, AND I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL LIKE A 'KEPT MAN'.

COME, BRUCE. I AM READY TO WORK.

TO WORK? TONIGHT?

THE DOOR TO THIS ROOM'S ALWAYS BEEN LOCKED. I'VE NEVER BEEN INSIDE IT.

IS THIS YOUR STUDIO? IT'S *INCREDIBLE*--GLASS FROM FLOOR TO CEILING--AS IF IT WERE HANGING IN SPACE BETWEEN THE STARS AND THE SEA!

BUT I SEE NO LIGHTS! NO SCULPTOR'S TOOLS! NOTHING!

I NEED NO LIGHT, BRUCE, SAVE THAT OF THE MOON! AND I WHO POSSESS *THE SKILL* NEED NO TOOLS TO CREATE MY ART!

I NEED ONLY... *MY HANDS!*

GLASS! YOUR HANDS ARE... *GLASS!*

I *WAS* AN ARTIST... ONCE... UNTIL A MAN BROKE MY HEART AS IF *IT* WERE GLASS. I SWORE REVENGE ON ALL MEN, BUT HAD NO POWER TO ACHIEVE IT--

--UNTIL I GAINED THE ABILITY TO TURN PEOPLE TO GLASS.

I HAVE BUT TO TOUCH YOU UNDER THE LIGHT OF THE FULL MOON--

--AND YOUR SKIN WILL HARDEN, YOUR EYES WILL GLAZE, AND YOUR BLOOD WILL BECOME LIKE LIQUID GLASS IN YOUR VEINS!

NO! KEEP BACK!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SETTING IN MOTION--!

INTERESTING, DR. BANNER. I HAVE HEARD MANY KINDS OF PLEAS FROM MANY KINDS OF MEN IN THE INSTANT BEFORE THEY BECAME TRANSFORMED FOREVER INTO GLASSY STATUES.

SOME HAVE OFFERED ME POWER. OTHERS, MONEY. STILL OTHERS, FAME.

YOU LITTLE FOOL! I WAS TRYING TO SAVE YOUR LIFE!

I'M CHANGING--BUT NOT INTO GLASS! AS MY BLOOD RACES AND MY HEART POUNDS, I'M TRANSFORMING INTO SOMEONE INHUMAN, SOMEONE MONSTROUS--

--SOMEONE WHO CAN TEAR THIS HOUSE OF GLASS DOWN AROUND YOUR HEAD BEFORE YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR EVIL SPELL!

WHO TRIES TO HURT THE HULK?!

I SAID I KNEW WHO YOU WERE--AND ***WHAT*** YOU WERE! I'D HOPED TO CATCH YOUR LIKENESS--TO TURN YOU TO GLASS--IN MID-TRANSFORMATION, IN THE EXACT MOMENT WHEN MAN BECAME MONSTER!

DISTRACT HIM, SNOWSTAR, THAT I MAY LAY MY HANDS UPON HIM!

GROWRRRR

HULK DOES NOT KNOW WHO WOMAN IS--OR WHY HE IS HERE--

8

--BUT WOMAN IS STUPID IF SHE THINKS DOG CAN HURT HULK--

SNOW-STAR! NO! I FORGOT THAT I WASN'T WEARING MY GLOVES!

I DIDN'T MEAN TO TOUCH HIM!

BUT TOUCH SNOWSTAR SHE **HAS**, AND, BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON, GLAZIER'S PET BECOMES AS BEAUTIFUL--AND AS FRAGILE -- AS GLASS!

SKRASH!

MY ART! YOU ARE DESTROYING MY COLLECTION!

I HAD HOPED TO MOUNT BRUCE BANNER, THE MAN, BECOMING THE HULK, IN MY GALLERY!

***BANNER!*** BANNER! ***BANNER!*** WAS IT BANNER WHO BROUGHT HULK HERE?

HULK NEVER BOTHERS BANNER, BUT BANNER ALWAYS GETS HULK INTO TROUBLE!

YOU MISBEGOTTEN MONSTER! CAN IT BE THAT YOU DO NOT KNOW THAT YOU AND BRUCE BANNER ARE ONE AND THE SAME...?

KRAKK!

THAT SOUND! WHAT--?

IT'S THE STUDIO! YOUR ENORMOUS WEIGHT IS TOO MUCH FOR ITS GLASS FLOOR AND WALLS! THEY'RE CRACKING! IF THEY SHATTER, WE'LL -- !

STUPID, TO BUILD A HOUSE OUT OF GLASS!

HULK DOES NOT SEE WOMAN IN WHITE! MAYBE SHE DROWNED?

HULK DOES NOT CARE! WOMAN IN WHITE WAS A FRIEND OF BANNER'S! HULK HATES BANNER AND BANNER'S FRIENDS!

HULK HAS HAD ENOUGH OF BEING HAUNTED AND HUNTED AND HOUNDED BY BANNER!

ONE DAY SOON, HULK WILL FIND BANNER, AND WHEN HE DOES --

--HULK WILL SMASH!

THUS, IT IS A VERY SCHIZOPHRENIC HULK WHO STALKS OFF INTO THE NIGHT...

...WHILE, BENEATH THE WAVES OFF MALIBU, A SHIMMERING STATUE SINKS DEEPER INTO THE SILT.

IT IS THE WOMAN CALLED GLAZIER, HER GLASSY TOUCH TURNED BACK UPON HERSELF.

SAVED?

-END-

**INTERLUDE**: NEW YORK CITY, A CONTINENT AWAY.

RADIO WAVES BEAMED FROM A MIDTOWN HOTEL INDICATE THAT A LONELY VIGIL IS STILL BEING KEPT.

OTEL

RICK JONES AND BETTY ROSS HAVE TAKEN TURNS AT THE TRANSMITTER, KEEPING CONTACT WITH THE NETWORK OF TEENAGERS ALL AROUND THE WORLD WHO HAVE AGREED TO BE THEIR EYES AND EARS IN THEIR SEACH FOR BRUCE BANNER, THE MAN WHO BECOMES THE HULK!

RICK JONES CALLING TEEN BRIGADE. ANY SIGN OF HULK, YET?

HE WAS LAST SIGHTED LEAPING FROM ISLAND TO ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC. BUT THAT WAS DAYS AGO.

DAILY BUGLE

CONGRESS T
INCOME TA

IF ONLY WE COULD GET OUT AND JOIN IN THE SEARCH, INSTEAD OF HAVING TO STAY HERE, BY THE RADIO.

YEAH, BETTY, I KNOW! TONY STARK ASKED ME WHAT WE NEEDED TO SEARCH FOR THE HULK, AND I TOLD HIM "**MOBILITY!**"

KNOCK KNOCK

HE SAID HE'D WORK ON IT.

YOU'RE--!

SCOTT LANG-- FROM STARK INTERNATIONAL.

MR. STARK SAID YOU NEEDED LONG-RANGE, HIGH-FREQUENCY PORTABLE TRANSMITTER/RECIEVERS--

--SO I WHIPPED **THESE** UP!

LOOK, BETTY! WRIST-RADIOS!

EACH ONE IS EVERY BIT AS POWERFUL AS THE SET YOU'RE USING NOW. THEY'LL GIVE YOU A LOT MORE MOBILITY.

WHAT DOES TONY STARK GET OUT OF ALL THIS?

NO CHARGE, MA'AM. TONY SAID SOMETHING ABOUT OWING RICK JONES MORE THAN HE COULD EVER REPAY.

YOU SEEM TO HAVE QUITE A FEW POWERFUL FRIENDS WHO THINK HIGHLY OF YOU, RICK.

OH, I ONCE SAVED THE WORLD*--SO THEY'RE GRATEFUL! NOW ALL I WANT TO DO IS SAVE DOC BANNER AND THE HULK...

...AND THESE WRIST-RADIOS, GIVEN OUT TO THE TEEN BRIGADE, MAY JUST MAKE THAT A POSSIBILITY!

*YEP-- BACK IN AVENGERS #97 --AWE-STRUCK AL.

INTERLUDE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

LEAVETAKING TIME. CONGRESSWOMAN RUTH MESSINGER PACKS HER ATTACHÉ CASE...

...AND STEPS OUT OF THE OFFICE FROM WHICH SHE HAS SERVED HER CONSTITUENCY HONESTLY AND WELL.

NOW, NOW, MARGARET, THERE'S NO NEED TO CRY. IT'S NOT AS IF THIS WERE THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN VOTED OUT OF OFFICE.

BUT... IT IS!

WELL, *NATIONAL* OFFICE, ANYWAY. BUT I'LL BE BACK.

I WOULDN'T BET ON THAT, CONGRESSWOMAN! YOUR OPPONENT WON BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY HAS FINALLY AWAKENED TO ITS RESPONSIBILITIES!

WE'RE GOING TO BE A STRONG NATION AGAIN -- LED BY MEN WITH IRON IN THEIR BLOOD!

SO, GENERAL THUNDERBOLT ROSS -- BACK IN UNIFORM AGAIN? HAS CONGRESS MOVED SO QUICKLY, THEN, TO RETURN YOUR COMMAND, *GAMMA BASE?*

THE COMMAND YOU TOOK FROM ME? NO, CONGRESSWOMAN -- BUT THEY WILL! AT LAST I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO DESTROY THE HULK WITHOUT CIVILIAN INTERFERENCE!

GENERAL, ALL I WANTED FOR MY COUNTRY, AND FOR THAT POOR MISUNDERSTOOD CREATURE MEN CALL THE HULK--

--WAS A LITTLE *PEACE!*

AS FOR YOU, IF YOU THINK THAT THIS CURRENT ADMINISTRATION IS GOING TO GIVE YOU UNLIMITED FUNDS AND MANPOWER TO HUNT DOWN THE HULK--

...I'D SAY YOU WERE IN FOR A VERY RUDE AWAKENING!

GOOD DAY, GENERAL ROSS. GIVE MY REGARDS TO THE PRESIDENT.

# FOUNDLING!

LOS ANGELES HAS ALWAYS BEEN A HARD TOWN ON THOSE WITHOUT FAME, FUNDS, OR FRIENDS. BUT, IF THINGS ARE BAD FOR FUGITIVE PHYSICIST DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, THEY'RE EVEN WORSE FOR THE YOUTH CALLED...

HELP ME, PLEASE! DON'T LET THEM GET ME!

BUS STOP

TACOS

BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA
WRITER - STORYTELLERS - ARTIST
JIM NOVAK - LETTERS
BEN SEAN - COLORS
AL MILGROM - EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER - BIG EDITOR

LOST IN HIS OWN THOUGHTS, BRUCE BANNER DOES NOT SEE OR HEAR THE WILD-EYED BOY BEARING DOWN ON HIM, UNTIL...

HELP ME! THEY'RE AFTER ME!

WHOA! SLOW DOWN, SON! WHO'S AFTER YOU?

THEY ARE!

THERE HE IS, JANICE! HE CAN'T GET AWAY FROM US NOW!

BEFORE BRUCE BANNER CAN MAKE SENSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENING, THE BOY IS SNATCHED FROM HIS GRASP!

LET ME GO! LET ME ALONE!

STOP IT, MARK! YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO COME WITH US!

CAN'T GET EXCITED! CAN'T DO ANYTHING THAT MIGHT TRIGGER MY CHANGE TO THE HULK! BUT I CAN'T JUST STAND BY EITHER!

STOP IT! YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO DRUG A CHILD!

I HAVE EVERY RIGHT! I'M THE BOY'S FATHER!

THEY'RE LYING! THEY'RE NOT MY PARENTS! THEY CAN'T BE!

THEY MUST HAVE ADOPTED ME--

--BECAUSE I CAN'T BE LIKE THEM!

IT--IT'S FOR HIS OWN GOOD! YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT!

I DON'T.

BUT WHAT CAN I DO? IF I PHONE FOR THE POLICE, I RUN THE RISK OF BEING RECOGNIZED AS THE MAN WHO TURNS INTO THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

I'M DR. ANDREW SARKAN, OF THE L.A. VALLEY CLINIC!

MY SON -- MARK -- HAS SERIOUS *PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS*... THINKING THAT HE'S AN ADOPTEE, FOR INSTANCE. HE ESCAPED FROM THERE.

L.A. VALLEY CLINIC

I... SEE. WHAT A TIME TO BRING THIS UP, BUT YOU'RE THE MAN I WAS COMING TO SEE--

--ABOUT A *JOB*.

HELP WANTED

IF YOU'RE QUALIFIED, WE'LL FIND WORK FOR YOU, MR...

FRANKLIN. BRUCE FRANKLIN.

ANDREW, WE'VE GOT TO TAKE OUR SON HOME NOW.

*HOME FOR THE SARKANS...*

*...BECOMES EMPLOYMENT FOR 'BRUCE FRANKLIN.'*

LUCKY FOR ME THE SARKANS AGREED TO TRY ME OUT WITHOUT ASKING FOR REFERENCES!

YOU'RE A TOP-NOTCH RESEARCH SCIENTIST, BRUCE, BUT SOMETHING'S TROUBLING YOU.

IT'S MARK SARKAN -- THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SON, SUSAN. HE'S ALWAYS KEPT DRUGGED AND INSIDE THAT LOCKED ROOM. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE KID?

DELUSIONS, APPARENTLY. WHEN HE REACHED PUBERTY, HE DEVELOPED THE IDEA THAT HIS PARENTS *WEREN'T* HIS PARENTS.

A LOT OF KIDS GO THROUGH THAT. USUALLY IT STEMS FROM RESENTMENT OF PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

IN MARK'S CASE, IT'S MORE SEVERE. HE'S CONVINCED THAT HIS PARENTS ARE DIFFERERT FROM HIM. INHUMAN... ALIEN.

HIS PANIC IS SO OVERWHELMING THAT THEY'VE HAD TO KEEP HIM UNDER HEAVY SEDATION WHILE HIS FATHER, POOR MAN, SEARCHES FOR A CURE.

BRUCE BANNER TRIES TO UNDERSTAND THAT WHAT THE SARKANS ARE DOING TO THEIR SON IS FOR THE BOY'S OWN GOOD.

HE TRIES...

...BUT SOMEHOW HE JUST CAN'T.

THAT NIGHT...

NO! I'M A MAN, NOT A MONSTER! A MAN! A...

EEEEE

...SCREAM?

IT CAME FROM THE LAB AREA!

NO AD

X-RAY

FROM THE ROOM WHERE MARK SARKAN IS KEPT!

SKRAAGH!

DOCTOR SARKAN!?!

WHAT *IS* IT, MAN? WHAT'S HAPPENED?

I--IT'S... MARK! I FELL ASLEEP!

SO TIRED OF CONSTANTLY WATCHING HIM-- I FORGOT TO ADMINISTER THE DRUGS THAT KEEP HIM FROM DISCOVERING... WHAT HE IS!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'WHAT HE IS'? HE'S YOUR SON, ISN'T HE?

"NO! A STRANGE, BAT-WINGED SPACECRAFT CRASHED ON THE CLINIC GROUNDS FIFTEEN YEARS AGO!

GOOD HEAVENS, JANICE-- IT'S A SPACESHIP!

CALL THE POLICE, ANDREW! HURRY!

"BUT I DIDN'T CALL THE AUTHORITIES! SOMETHING STOPPED ME! INSTEAD, JANICE AND I RACED TO THE SHATTERED SHIP AND PEERED INSIDE!

"THERE, IN FRONT OF AN ALIEN CONTROL CONSOLE, WE SAW TWO HEAPS OF ASH!

"DEAD!

"BUT *SOMETHING* WAS ALIVE IN THE SPACESHIP!

WAHHH

YE GODS!

IT'S HIDEOUS, ANDREW! WHAT IS IT?

SMALL! ALIEN! IT APPEARS TO BE IN SOME SORT OF *CRADLE!*

"OUR VOICES SEEMED TO CALM IT! ITS ALIEN EYES SCANNED OUR FEATURES...

"... AND IT CHANGED!"

ANDREW, IT-- IT'S A *BABY!*

"THE ASHEN REMAINS IN THE SPACECRAFT HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN ITS PARENTS! THE CHILD POSSESSED THE POWER TO MIMIC THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATURES OF ANOTHER RACE!

"SINCE IT *APPEARED* TO BE A HUMAN INFANT, OUR HEARTS WENT OUT TO IT! WE CARRIED IT AWAY AS THE SPACESHIP SELF-DESTRUCTED.

"THE... CHILD... REMAINED HUMAN-LOOKING! CHILDLESS OURSELVES, MY WIFE AND I ADOPTED IT AND RAISED IT LIKE ANY NORMAL EARTH CHILD!"

WE NEVER TOLD HIM-- BUT PHYSICAL CHANGES AT PUBERTY MADE MARK SUSPECT A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND HIM! HE THOUGHT *WE* WERE THE ALIENS...

WHEN ALL ALONG IT WAS HE...? AND NOW HE KNOWS?!

HE KNOWS HE'S NOT LIKE US-- BUT HE DOESN'T KNOW *WHAT* HE IS! HE CHANGES FROM ONE ALIEN FORM TO ANOTHER, APPARENTLY MIMICING RACES WHOSE APPEARANCE WAS PROGRAMMED INTO HIS MEMORY WHILE HE LAY IN HIS CRADLE!

BUT THIS, AS HIDEOUS AS IT IS, SEEMS TO BE HIS *TRUE* FORM!

IT *IS* 'MOTHER'-- AND NOW THAT I HAVE COME OF AGE, I SEEM TO HEAR FAR-OFF VOICES IN MY HEAD WHISPERING THE TRUTH TO ME... THAT I AM NOT OF EARTH... NOT HUMAN--

--BUT A *DIRE WRAITH!**

*AS ALL LOYAL READERS OF ROM SHOULD HAVE GUESSED BY NOW --AL.

GET YOUR HUSBAND OUT OF HERE, MRS. SARKAN! I'LL TRY TO STOP MARK--!

I AM NOT 'MARK', HUMAN! THAT ENTITY WAS A LIE, A FICTION!

I AM *KATTAN-TU*, SON OF *WENDEN* AND *MARAG-TU*, CONCEIVED BENEATH THE BLACK S N OF THE DARK NEBULA!

ALL THIS I KNOW FROM TAPES PLAYED TO ME, AS MY PARENTS FLED THROUGH SPACE!*

*FLEEING FROM THE SPACEKNIGHTS AFTER THE WRAITHS FAILED IN THEIR ATTEMPTED INVASION OF GALADOR--AL.

FROM THOSE TAPES I ALSO LEARNED THAT I COULD ASSUME THE SHAPE OF ANY LIVING THING! MY HUMAN 'PARENTS' KEPT ME FROM REMEMBERING WITH DRUGS--

--BUT THERE IS NOTHING TO *STOP* ME FROM REMEMBERING NOW--

NOTHING TO STOP ME FROM BECOMING WHATEVER I CHOOSE TO BECOME!

NOTHING TO STOP ME FROM DESTROYING YOU!

BUT THERE IS SOMETHING! A HAMMERING HEART, SET RACING BY FEAR--!

--SURGING ADRENALIN, SENT COURSING THROUGH VEINS BY THE DANGER--!

AND, PERHAPS, JUST THE SLIGHTEST DESIRE ON BRUCE BANNER'S PART TO SAVE HIMSELF FROM CERTAIN DEATH, BY EXCHANGING HIS USELESS INTELLIGENCE FOR THE BRUTE SAVAGERY OF... *THE INCREDIBLE HULK!*

SO, HUMANS POSSESS THE POWER TO ALTER THEIR APPEARANCE, TOO! I NEVER SAW ANY EVIDENCE OF THAT IN THE SARKANS!

WHAT ARE SARKANS? WHO ARE YOU?

I? I AM A CREATURE FROM BEYOND THE STARS, GREEN ONE!

I AM THE DEATH-KNELL OF YOUR ENTIRE, HUMAN RACE!

MONSTER SHOOTS NEEDLES AT THE HULK?

NEEDLES CANNOT HURT HULK IF THEY DO NOT HIT HIM!

STAK

SCHAK

STAK

YOU ARE POWERFUL! THE TAPES THAT FED MY MEMORY WITH INFORMATION OF MY HERITAGE NEVER PREPARED ME TO FACE SOMEONE LIKE YOU!

I MUST TAKE ANOTHER FORM--FLEE--AND FIND SOME WAY TO REJOIN MY KIND!

NEEDLE-MONSTER BECOMES BIRD-MONSTER AND TRIES TO FLY AWAY FROM HULK?

NO! MONSTER TRIED TO HURT HULK--AND WINGS CANNOT CARRY YOU HIGH ENOUGH TO ESCAPE HULK'S LEAP!

FROOM!

HUNH! HULK FELT BIRD-MONSTER'S BONES BREAK WHEN BIRD-MONSTER STRUCK THE GROUND!

BUT HULK IS NOT HURT!

THAT MEANS THAT HULK IS STRONGER THAN BIRD-MONSTER! HULK WILL FINISH BIRD-MONSTER OFF..

HUH?! BIRD-MONSTER BECOMES SNAKE-MONSTER!

WITH FANGS THAT DRIP POISON PERILOUS TO YOUR SURVIVAL, HUMAN!

*ANDREW!* 'BRUCE FRANKLIN' WAS BRUCE BANNER--!

HE'S ***THE HULK!*** AND IT LOOKS AS IF HE'S LOCKED IN A DEATH-DUEL WITH THE THING THAT WAS... OUR SON!

BUT I CAN END THE BATTLE, IF I CAN ONLY GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO GIVE MARK A MEGADOSE OF THE SEDATIVES THAT KEPT HIM FROM REMEMBERING HIS DIRE WRAITH HERITAGE--

--AND MADE HIM THINK HE WAS THE INNOCENT, HUMAN CHILD WE TRIED SO HARD TO RAISE!

THE DRUG IS ADMINISTERED...

...BUT ANDREW SARKAN RECEIVES NO GRATITUDE FOR HIS ACT!

THWAM!

PUNY HUMAN DID SOMETHING TO SNAKE-MONSTER! IT GROWS WEAK IN HULK'S HANDS!

NOW HULK WILL PAY THE MONSTER BACK FOR TRYING TO HURT HULK -- BY ***SMASHING*** SNAKE-MONSTER!

HULK, IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY, DON'T STRIKE THE KILLING BLOW!

LOOK AT HIS EYES, ANDREW! THERE IS NO MERCY IN THEM!

HULK, WHATEVER THAT CREATURE IS -- WHEREVER IT COMES FROM -- MY WIFE AND I RAISED HIM AS OUR SON!

WE -- WE CAN'T STOP LOVING HIM JUST BECAUSE HE'S DIFFERENT...

...JUST BECAUSE HE'S BAD!

PUNY HUMANS ARE CRAZY! BOY IS NOT BOY!

BOY IS MONSTER!

YOU CALL THIS POOR UNFORTUNATE CREATURE A MONSTER? YOU?!

THEN WHAT DOES THAT MAKE YOU, HULK? YOU, WHOSE FISTS CAN LEVEL A MOUNTAIN! YOU, WHOSE RAGE CAUSES CITIES TO TREMBLE IN FEAR! YOU, WHO DESTROYS ALL YOU LAY YOUR HANDS ON!

WHO ARE YOU TO CALL MY SON A MONSTER?!

HULK IS HULK.

HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS.

AND PUNY HUMAN IS RIGHT...

HULK IS NOTHING BUT A MONSTER!

HIS AGONY CARRIES HIM INTO THE NIGHT! FOR ALL HIS POWER, THE HULK KNOWS HE CAN NEVER CHANGE THE NIGHTMARE OF HIS OWN EXISTENCE!

22

IT'S AVALANCHE VERSUS LANDSLIDE WITH THE HULK CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE!

DON'T MISS... I FEEL THE EARTH MOVE UNDER MY FEET!

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THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

TM

FEEL THE EARTH MOVE UNDER YOUR FEET, HULK?

MILGROM

YOU'VE BEEN ATTACKED BY LANDSLIDE AND AVALANCHE!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA WRITER-STORYTELLERS-ARTIST | JIM NOVAK, LETTERS SHARENE WARFIELD, COLORS | ALLEN MILGROM EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER THE LEADER

## I FEEL THE EARTH MOVE UNDER MY FEET, AND THE SKY COME TUMBLING DOWN!

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS EARTH TREMORS HAVE WRACKED LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CRACKING AND TWISTING THE SANTA MONICA FREEWAY OUT OF SHAPE.

THEN THE RAINS STARTED --TORRENTIAL-- UNCEASING -- THREATENING TO CAUSE MUD-SLIDES ALONG THE COAST.

THE LAST THING THE HIGHWAY PATROL NEEDED WAS ***ANOTHER*** PROBLEM.

ENTER: THE INCREDIBLE HULK.

RAIN'S MAKING IT HARD TO GO AT MORE THAN A SNAIL'S PACE! WAIT! WHAT'S THAT ON THE ROAD AHEAD?

SOMEONE'S STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FREEWAY!

***AUTHOR'S NOTE:*** DESPITE THE NEAR DESTRUCTION OF AN AIRLINER AND LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, THIS STORY WAS ***NOT*** WRITTEN BY ***KAMIKAZE CHRIS CLAREMONT.***

WHILE STRUGGLING WIPERS VAINLY TRY TO SWIPE THE RAIN OFF HIS WINDSHIELD, THE HIGHWAY PATROLMAN AT LAST MAKES OUT THE FIGURE STANDING IN THE CENTER OF THE ROAD.

GET LIGHTS OUT OF HULK'S EYES!

SWEET HEAVEN--!

SKREE

SKREE SWIPE SWIPE

STATE POLICE

THE HULK'S RAGE HAS BEEN MOUNTING EVER SINCE HIS MIGHTY MUSCLES HURLED HIM AWAY FROM THE LOS ANGELES VALLEY CLINIC. THERE HE HAD SOUGHT TO SAVE TWO PEOPLE FROM A CERTIFIED MONSTER... ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT THE ALIEN CREATURE WAS THEIR ADOPTED SON.*

THE COUPLE HAD SAID THAT IT WAS HE, THE HULK, WHO WAS THE MONSTER.

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

CAN'T LET HIM GET ME.

HAVE TO GET AWAY!

*LAST ISH--AL.

TONIGHT, LASHED BY RAIN, ASTRIDE THE HEAVING EARTH, THE HULK HAS DECIDED TO PLAY THE MONSTER'S ROLE!

CLICK CLICK CLICK

SUDDENLY...

HUNH? GROUND MOVES AGAIN UNDER HULK'S FEET!

EARTHQUAKE-- TEARING UP THE FREEWAY!

IT'S HURLING THE HULK DOWN THE EMBANKMENT!

RAARRRGHH!

SSSHSTROOM!

I'M SAVED! SOME DIVINE PROVIDENCE HAS INTER-CEDED TO SAVE MY LIFE!

STATE

I WON'T TEMPT FATE BY BEING HERE--

--WHEN THE HULK CLIMBS BACK UP TO THE ROAD-WAY!

THE HIGHWAY PATROLMAN FLEES THROUGH THE STORM...

...UNAWARE THAT THE MIGHTEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH HAS ALREADY FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT HIM.

WHAT MAKES GROUND MOVE UNDER HULK?

IS IT THE WORK OF ONE OF HULK'S ENEMIES? SOME NEW WAY OF ATTACKING HULK?

AGAIN! GROUND TREMBLES AGAIN!

STONES FALL AND MUD SLIDES AGAIN!

WHO HAS THE POWER TO MAKE EARTH MOVE? WHO MAKES GROUND TEAR ITSELF APART?

AS IF IN ANSWER TO THE HULK'S QUESTION, A FIGURE APPEARS ON THE SHATTERED FREEWAY ABOVE, ILLUMINATED AGAINST THE STORM-CLOUDS.

THE FIGURE IS SURROUNDED BY A LUMINESCENT GLOW THAT SEEMS TO SHIMMER EERILY, AS IT STRIDES AWAY INTO THE NIGHT.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE FIGURE IS FAMILIAR TO THE HULK.

THE JADE GIANT DECIDES TO FOLLOW IT.

A LITTLE FURTHER SOUTH...

PLEASE KEEP YOUR SEAT BELTS FASTENED, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. WE ARE BEGINNING OUR APRPROACH TO LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

STORM'S ROUGH.

I'VE FLOWN IN ROUGHER.

THE PASSENGERS ARE TAKING THE BUFFETING CALMLY.

BUT THEN, THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE EARTH-QUAKE WARNINGS.

ON THIS FLIGHT ARE RICK JONES AND BETTY ROSS -- TWO PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE IT THEIR MISSION IN LIFE TO HELP THE INCREDIBLE HULK.

THESE WRIST-RADIOS TONY STARK HAD DEVELOPED FOR US ARE WORKING LIKE A DREAM, BETTY.

ALREADY MY RE-FORMED TEEN BRIGADE HAS PASSED ON THE WORD THAT THE HULK'S RETURNED TO THE STATES! HE WAS SIGHTED NEAR LOS ANGELES!

IF WE CAN CONFIRM THAT, THE AVENGERS HAVE AGREED TO HELP FIND, AND HOPE-FULLY CURE, DR. BANNER!

YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED A LOT, RICK. I'M PROUD OF YOU -- AND I'M SURE BRUCE WOULD BE, TOO, IF HE KNEW.

BUT THIS NEW *TEEN BRIGADE*...

THEY SOUND SO YOUNG -- AS YOUNG AS ***YOU*** WERE ON THAT DAY WHEN BRUCE BANNER SAVED YOU FROM A GAMMA BOMB BLAST ONLY TO BE TURNED INTO THE HULK.

ARE YOU SURE IT'S RIGHT TO INVOLVE THESE CHILDREN IN SO DANGEROUS AN UNDERTAKING --

--AS THE TRACKING DOWN OF... A MONSTER.

*SHE CHOKES ON THE WORD, FOR SHE LOVES THE MAN IMPRISONED WITHIN THE HORROR CALLED THE HULK.*

*THE JETLINER BEGINS ITS DESCENT.*

*LANDING GEARS TOUCH THE RUNWAY...*

...AND ALL INSANITY CUTS LOOSE!

KKRRRAKROOM

EARTHQUAKE! IT'S RIPPING UP THE RUNWAY AHEAD OF US! WE'VE GOT TO TAKE OFF AGAIN!

NOT WITHOUT TEARING OUR WINGS OFF! THERE'S NO TIME!

WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHY IS THE PLANE SHUDDERING?

HEAVEN HELP US, WE'RE CRASHING!

STAY IN YOUR SEATS! DON'T PANIC!

TH-THE LAD'S RIGHT! WE-WE'VE GOT TO STAY CALM!

RICK JONES DOES HIS LEVEL BEST TO REASSURE HIS PASSENGERS...

...ALL THE WHILE WISHING HE COULD SEE WHAT THE PILOT SEES!

IF ONLY HE KNEW!

ARE MY EYES PLAYING TRICKS ON ME, OR IS THERE SOMEONE STANDING ON THE RUNWAY?!

SOMEONE?

INDEED!

WELCOME TO L.A.!

HA HA HA

HA HA

BEAMS OF FORCE HAMMER OUT FROM THAT SOMEONE'S HANDS...

...AND WHAT'S LEFT OF THE ALREADY TWISTED RUNWAY SHATTERS FURTHER!

THE GREAT JET LISTS TO THE SIDE, LANDING GEARS CRUMPLE, A WING IS SHEARED OFF.

THE PLANE GRINDS TO A GUT-WRENCHING HALT!

MIRACULOUSLY, ITS FUEL TANKS HAVE NOT EXPLODED, TO UNLEASH AN INFERNO FROM WHICH NO LIVING THING COULD ESCAPE.

AT LEAST NOT YET!

RICK, WE'VE GOT TO GET THESE PEOPLE OFF THE PLANE!

RIGHT!

THIS WAY, EVERYBODY! FOLLOW ME!

CABIN'S BEEN RUPTURED! WE CAN CLIMB OUT AND DOWN THE WING!

THEY'RE IN A STATE OF SHOCK! I'LL HAVE TO LEAD THE WAY!

THE BRAVE YOUTH STRIKES THE RUNWAY.

GOTTA GET 'EM AWAY FROM THE PLANE IN CASE THE FUEL IGNITES!

C'MON, PEOPLE! THE COAST IS CLEAR!

IS IT, PUNK? *IS IT?!*

WHO--?

CALL ME ***AVALANCHE***, KID--THE MUTANT WHOSE TOUCH DESTROYS INANIMATE OBJECTS! OR, BETTER, YET, CALL ME THE '***GUY WHO BLACKMAILED CALIFORNIA!***'

WHEEOO WHEEOO WHEEOO

HUH? EMERGENCY TRUCKS, FINALLY MAKIN' THEIR WAY ACROSS THE TARMAC I SHATTERED SO THE PLANES WOULD CRASH!

I'LL SHOW 'EM NOT TO INTERFERE WITH ME OR MY '*HOSTAGES*'!

BACK, BOZOS--UNTIL MY DEMANDS HAVE BEEN MET BY THE STATE!

AGAIN AVALANCHE UNLEASHES HIS MUTANT POWER, AND THE RUNWAY RUPTURES!

RICK, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S GOING ON OUT HERE?

IT'S SOME KIND OF SUPER-NUT-- TERRORIZING L.A., BETTY!

HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT DOING INCREDIBLE DAMAGE UNTIL THE STATE MEETS HIS DEMANDS!

LET'S SEE HOW FAR HE GETS AFTER I SEND OUT AN EMERGENCY CALL TO THE AVENGERS!

THE AVENGERS?

LAST TIME I WENT UP AGAINST A SUPER-TEAM, THEY LAID ME OUT COLD!*

I CAME TO LOS ANGELES TO ESCAPE THAT SUPER-TEAM SCENE, PUNK-- TO COMMIT A LITTLE HONEST BLACKMAIL WITHOUT INTERFERENCE!

*SEE THE UNCANNY X-MEN #142 -- AL.

ONCE THEY PAY ME MY PRICE, I'M OFF TO SUNNIER CLIMES!

IN THE MEANTIME, JUNIOR--*HOLD THE PHONE!*

*UNNGH!*

*THOUGH HE HAS TRAINED BESIDE SUPER HEROES, AND ONCE EVEN CONTRIBUTED TO THE SAVING OF HIS WORLD...*

*...RICK JONES IS STILL ONLY HUMAN-- HOMO SAPIEN-- WHILE AVALANCHE'S MUTANT POWERS MAKE HIM ONE OF THAT CLASS CALLED HOMO SUPERIOR.*

*THERE IS NO DENYING THE MUTANT'S MIGHT...*

*...ESPECIALLY WHEN DEALING WITH A DEFENSELESS YOUTH.*

*NOT FAR DISTANT...*

HULK KNOWS SHINY MAN! HE HAS SEEN SHINY MAN BEFORE!

WHERE?* HULK CAN'T REMEMBER, BUT HULK KNOWS THAT HE HAS SEEN SHINY MAN MOVE THE GROUND!

*IF WE WE TELL YOU WHERE HERE, WE'LL GIVE AWAY THE SURPRISE! WATCH FOR A MORE REVEALING FOOTNOTE FURTHER ON-- AL.

HULK WILL FOLLOW SHINY MAN -- TRY TO REMEMBER HIM!

*AND FOLLOW THE GLOWING FIGURE THE HULK DOES, LIKE A MOTH DRAWN TO A PHOSPHORESCENT FLAME.*

LOS ANGELES AIRPORT GATE 3

MEANWHILE, ACROSS LOS ANGELES AIRPORT'S DEVASTATED RUNWAYS...

NO MORE JETS COMIN' IN! THEY MUST'VE DIVERTED 'EM TO SAN DIEGO!

STILL PLENTY'A HAVOC TA WREAK HERE, THOUGH!

HAH! THIS SURE BEATS SCHLEPPIN' AROUND AFTER ***MYSTIQUE*** AN' HER REVIVED ***BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS!***

YEAH, ON MY OWN I'M GONNA BRING THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA TO ITS KNEES -- FORCE IT TO PAY A RANSOM FOR ITS SURVIVAL --

--OR ELSE I'M GONNA USE MY POWERS TA TRIGGER THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT!

THEN A QUIET, YET COMMANDING VOICE RINGS OUT OVER THE RUBBLE.

THAT YOU MUST NEVER DO, SURFACE-DWELLER--

--FOR YOUR ACTIONS HERE THREATEN ***MY*** WORLD AS WELL!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT! SOME SKINNY CREEP IN THE SILLIEST COSTUME I EVER SAW TELLIN' ME--AVALANCHE-- WHAT TO DO?

THEY SEND YOU OUT AS COMIC RELIEF, BUB?

NO ONE SENT ME. I CAME OF MY OWN ACCORD.

AND THE NAME IS... ***LANDSLIDE!****

SLENDER FINGERS TOUCH THE EARTH --AND THE EARTH HEAVES UP.

*FROM MARVEL TREASURY EDITION #25--'***SPIDER-MAN AND THE HULK AT THE WINTER OLYMPICS***'! TOLD YA WE'D TELL YA SOON! --AL.

Y-YOUR POWERS-- THEY'RE ALMOST THE SAME AS MINE!

ARE YOU A ***MUTANT***, TOO?!

NO, I AM AN ***OUTCAST***--A HUMAN WHO CHOSE TO LIVE IN SUBTERRANEAN DARKNESS IN THE KINGDOM OF THE ***MOLE MAN***. WE STRIVE TO LIVE IN PEACE, BUT RECENTLY OUR PEACE WAS SHATTERED.

IT WAS I WHO BROUGHT WORD OF IMPENDING DISASTER TO THE MOLE MAN AND HIS AGED QUEEN ***KALA***...

MY LORD, TREMORS ON THE SURFACE ABOVE THREATEN TO CAST PART OF YOUR REALM INTO THE SEA!

THESE TREMORS, LANDSLIDE --ARE THEY NATURAL IN ORIGIN? IF SO, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO BUT FLEE!

NO, MOLE MAN! I SENSE THEY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT--

--BY A BEING POSSESSING EARTH-MOVING POWERS SIMILAR TO THOSE YOU GAVE TO ME!

"I VOLUNTEERED TO GO, FROM SUBTERRANEA TO TRY TO STAY THE DISASTERS THREATENING BOTH THE MOLE MAN'S REALM AND THE SURFACE WORLD.

"LUMINESCENT PHOSPHORS CLUNG TO ME-- CAUSING ME TO GLOW --AS I EMERGED FROM BENEATH THE GROUND --

"--AND FOLLOWED THE TRAIL OF THE EARTH-RENDING TREMORS HERE..."

...TO YOU! YOUR MAD ACTS OF DESTRUCTION MUST CEASE, SURFACE-DWELLER, OR YOU SHALL ANSWER FOR THEM TO LANDSLIDE!

OKAY, SKINNY!

HOW'S THIS FOR AN ANSWER?!

THE TARMAC HEAVES BEFORE AVALANCHE'S BLUDGEONING FORCE-BEAMS...

...AND WHIPS LIKE A THING ALIVE AT THE SLENDER LANDSLIDE.

BUT LANDSLIDE HAS ONLY TO REACH UP AND TOUCH THE WRITHING STONE...

...AND IT IS TORN APART BY INTERNAL SHOCKWAVES OF UNIMAGINABLE POWER.

THERE ARE TWO EARTH-MOVERS, BUT THEIR BATTLE IS NOT WITH THE HULK! GOOD! LET THEM DESTROY EACH OTHER!

BUT HULK WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE...!

BUT A GROAN ARRESTS THE ATTENTION OF THE GREAT GREEN GARGANTUA...

THE GROAN OF A LAD BEATEN DOWN BY AVALANCHE, A LAD WHO THE HULK KNOWS.

RICK?

WHO--? THE HULK!

THE WOMAN, TOO, IS KNOWN TO THE GREAT JADE GIANT.

AYE, WELL KNOWN, INDEED!

BETTY!

HE HAS KNOWN HER --AND LOVED HER--IN BOTH ASPECTS OF HIS IDENTITY. THOUGH TIME HAS TAKEN THEM DOWN DIFFERENT PATHS, THE HULK HAS NEVER FORGOTTEN BETTY ROSS.

BUT HE IS A MONSTER. THAT IS WHAT EVERYONE SAYS. A MONSTER HAS NO USE FOR LOVE, OR FRIENDSHIP, OR...

HULK! DON'T TURN AWAY! RICK'S HURT!

HELP US, HULK! PLEASE!

HELP? EVERY TIME THE HULK TRIES TO HELP, HE IS ATTACKED... CALLED A MONSTER!

WHY SHOULD HULK HELP?

IN HIS HEART, THE HULK ALREADY KNOWS THE ANSWER.

FOR RICK.

FOR BETTY.

EARTH-MOVERS! STOP FIGHTING!

NOW!

KAVROOM!

SHOCKWAVE...

...AFTER SHOCKWAVE...

...AFTER SHOCKWAVE...

...SMASHES THE TWO MASTERS OF EARTH-MOVING OFF THEIR FEET AND TOSSES THEM LIKE TOYS INTO THE AIR.

THE HULK!

THE HULK? WHAT IN SAM HILL IS *THAT* BRUISER DOIN' HERE?!

GO! GO FIGHT SOMEWHERE ELSE WHERE PUNY HUMANS WILL NOT BE HURT! *GO!*

CHAMPION OF THE WEAK, IS IT? I DON'T RECALL THAT EVER BEIN' YOUR REP, MONSTER!

IN FACT, THE WAY I HEAR IT, ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS *ANNOUNCE* THAT YOU'RE COMIN' TA TOWN TA MAKE PROPERTY VALUES PLUMMET!

BUT I AIN'T ONE OF YOUR '*PUNY HUMANS*,' GREENIE! I'M HOMO SUPERIOR--

--AND THIS MUTANT DOESN'T SCARE!

RIPPLING FLUIDLY BEFORE THE UNCANNY POWER OF AVALANCHE, THE RUNWAY HEAVES UP AND ROLLS BACK UPON THE HULK.

THE EMERALD MONSTER IS NOT IMPRESSED!

KRAKOW!

IS THROWING GROUND AT HULK ALL EARTH-MOVER CAN DO?

THAT WAS JUST FOR STARTERS, GREENIE!

I WANTED TA SEE YOU STRUT YER STUFF SO I'D KNOW HOW MUCH POWER IT'D TAKE--

--TA BURY YOU!

HAMMERED BY THE BEAMS OF FORCE VIBRATING FROM AVALANCHE'S HANDS, THE RUNWAY CAVES IN, DROPPING THE HULK INTO A CAVERNOUS HOLE.

BEHIND AVALANCHE, A JET APPROACHES FOR A LANDING. ITS INSTRUMENTS DAMAGED BY THE STORM, IT NEVER RECEIVED THE WARNING TO AVOID THE AIRPORT.

NOW, ITS PILOTS SEE WHAT THEIR CRIPPLED INSTRUMENTS COULD NOT TELL THEM.

LORD IN HEAVEN, IT-- IT LOOKS LIKE A BATTLE-FIELD DOWN THERE!

AND THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN PULL UP IN TIME!

WHERE SECONDS BEFORE THERE STRETCHED A MILE-LONG RUNWAY, THE EARTH IS NOW TORN OPEN IN A GAPING WOUND.

IT ALMOST BELABORS THE OBVIOUS TO SAY THAT NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE CAN SAVE THE DOOMED JETLINER.

A MIRACLE...

...OR THE DESCRIPTION-DEFYING POWER OF THE AWESOMELY INCREDIBLE **HULK.**

STUPID PLANE! STOP BEFORE YOU CRASH IN HOLE!

DO YOU HEAR HULK?

STOP!

STOP!

THE JETLINER ...STOPS.

ABOVE, AVALANCHE'S INTERPRETATION OF THE AVERTED DISASTER IS OBSCURED BY A RISING CLOUD OF DUST THROWN UP BY THE JET'S BACKWASH, AND THE DEAFENING ROAR OF THE JET ENGINES!

A'RIIIGHT! I TOTALLED IT!

I MUST BE WEIRD, DIGGIN' DESTRUCTION!

YOU ARE WORSE! YOU ARE SICK, TWISTED, MINDLESSLY MURDEROUS!

YOU EMBODY EVERY EVIL OF THE SURFACE WORLD I SOUGHT TO ESCAPE.

SKINNY, YER TALKIN' TO THE DUDE WHO JUST PUT THE KIBOSH ON THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

IF I COULD KILL OL' GREENSKIN, I CAN TAKE **YOU** OUT IN MY SLEEP!

OH, LORD! THEY'RE FIGHTING AGAIN-- TEARING UP THE EARTH!

BETTY! WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT'S GOING ON?

AFTER AVALANCHE KNOCKED YOU UNCONSCIOUS TO STOP YOU FROM SUMMONING THE AVENGERS, ANOTHER SUPER-BEING-- WITH SIMILAR EARTH-MOVING POWERS --SHOWED UP TO FIGHT HIM! THEIR BATTLE HAS TORN APART THE AIRPORT! THEN THE HULK APPEARED...

THE HULK? HERE?!

YES! I ASKED HIM TO HELP, AND HE ATTACKED AVALANCHE!

A PLANE ALMOST CRASHED! THE HULK WAS BENEATH IT! I-I COULDN'T SEE, BUT AVALANCHE SAYS THE HULK IS... *DEAD!*

EARTH-MOVER LIED!

THAT VOICE, BELLOWING LIKE THUNDER--!

IT'S YOU! YOU DIDN'T DIE! YOU'RE ALIVE!

BETTY ASKED HULK TO HELP-- HULK HELPED BY SAVING PLANE! ISN'T THAT THE KIND OF HELP BETTY WANTED?

OH, YES, HULK! YES!

YOU DID GOOD, HULK! YOU DID JUST FINE!

HUNH! HULK KNOWS!

BUT EARTH-MOVER TRIED TO USE PLANE TO SMASH HULK!

HULK FEELS SORRY FOR EARTH-MOVER--

--BECAUSE, WHEN HULK GETS DONE WITH HIM, EARTH-MOVER WILL BE LUCKY IF HE CAN MOVE *HIMSELF!*

MEANWHILE, ACROSS WHAT'S LEFT OF LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S LANDING FIELD...

I CAME HERE TA BLEED THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DRY, SKINNY, BUT A NEW IDEA OCCURS TA ME! THERE MUST BE GOLD, SILVER, DIAMONDS DOWN WHERE YOU COME FROM!

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE MOLE MAN'LL PAY TO KEEP PART OF HIS KINGDOM FROM FALLIN' INTO THE SEA?

NOTHING! FOR I AM HERE TO SEE THAT SUCH A THING NEVER COMES TO PASS!

REALLY? WELL, THEN, MAYBE I'LL JUST HAVETA SEND THE MOLE MAN A MESSAGE TELLIN' HIM THAT HIS BOY SCOUT BLEW HIS *GOOD DEED FOR THE DAY!*

IN FACT, I THINK I'LL OPEN UP THE EARTH--

--AND SEND YOU BACK TO SUBTERRANEA... *SPECIAL DELIVERY!*

A CREVICE OPENS BENEATH MY FEET! I AM LOSING MY BALANCE!

THAT'S NOT ALL YOU'RE GONNA LOSE, SQUIRT! GIMME THAT MASK YOU'RE WEARIN'!

NO! MY HOOD FILTERS THE LIGHT!

YEAH, I FIGURED THOSE LITTLE BABY-BLUES OF YOURS WOULD BE KINDA SENSITIVE AFTER ALL THE TIME YOU'VE SPENT IN DARKNESS!

OUR *POWERS* MAY BE SIMILAR, BUT WHEN IT COMES TA RUTHLESSNESS, I'M TOP DOG! *ARRGH!*

THE VIBRATORY POWERS I WIELD TO SHATTER INANIMATE OBJECTS--

--CAN ALSO BE USED TO SET UP INTERNAL VIBRATIONS IN AN *ANIMATE* FOE, AVALANCHE!

YOU HURT ME, SKINNY! YOU HURT ME!

THAT'S 'CAUSE I LET YOU TOUCH ME!

IT WAS AN ACCIDENT-- YA REACHED OUT BLINDLY AN' MANAGED TA GET YOUR HANDS ON ME!

IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!

ESPECIALLY SINCE I DON'T HAVETA LAY A HAND ON YA, TA DO TO YOU WHAT YOU TRIED TA DO TA ME!

ALL I GOTTA DO IS STAND OVER YA AND LET MY HAMMERIN' FORCE-BEAMS POUND YER BONES TA PULP!

I... URK!

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, EARTH-MOVER!

THE HULK? YOU'RE NOT DEAD?!

NO, HULK IS NEVER DEAD!

NOW, GO AWAY, EARTH-MOVER!

GO FAR, FAR AWAY!

OH CRIPES--!

FWOOM!

THE FLIGHT CONTROL TOWER SHUDDERS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM UNDER THE IMPACT OF AVALANCHE'S ARMORED FORM.

STUNNED, SHAKEN, THE EVIL MUTANT HAS LESS THAN A SECOND TO RECOVER FROM THE BONE-CRUSHING COLLISION BEFORE HE SEES...

THE HULK -- LEAPIN' IN FOR THE KILL!

CAN'T LET HIM LAND ON ME!

THROOM!

GOTTA ROLL CLEAR!

THE GLOVES ARE OFF! THE GREEN GONZO MEANS TA PULVERIZE ME!

BUT, MONSTER OR NO -- THE HULK STILL STARTED OUT AS HUMAN! I'M A MUTANT -- A HOMO SUPERIOR! I *GOTTA* BE BETTER THAN HE IS!

SUCH IS THE STUFF OF WHICH DREAMS ARE MADE...

...FOR, THOUGH HIS STONE AND STEEL-SHATTERING MUTANT ABILITIES HAVE MADE THE FLIGHT CONTROL TOWER TOO UNSTABLE TO STAND -- CAUSING IT TO TOPPLE TOWARDS THE HULK -- AVALANCHE HAS MADE A FATAL ERROR IN JUDGMENT.

WHAT *MIGHT* SLAY THE INCREDIBLE HULK, WOULD MOST CERTAINLY SLAY AVALANCHE, AS WELL.

SWEET PEAK FREENS! I GOTTA GET OUTTA THE WAY...!

BUT THE CONTROL TOWER--WHICH WAS EVACUATED WHEN THE EARTH'S TREMORS SET IT TO SHAKING--NEVER TOUCHES THE GROUND... OR AVALANCHE.

THE HULK CAUGHT THE BLASTED THING--CAUGHT TONS OF CONCRETE AN' STEEL LIKE IT WAS A MEDICINE BALL!

NOW HE'S HEFTIN' THE CONTROL TOWER--USIN' IT TO SWAT ME LIKE I WAS A FLY!

BUT AVALANCHE AIN'T NO FLY!

CONCRETE AND STEEL TURN TO POWDER AS AVALANCHE HAMMERS THROUGH IT.

EARTH-MOVER LIVES? BUILDING DID NOT CRUSH EARTH-MOVER?

NOT A CHANCE, GREEN AN' GRUESOME! PULVERIZIN THAT CONTROL TOWER JUST HELPED TA REMIND ME HOW POWERFUL I AM!

I CAN CRUSH ROCK, SHATTER STEEL--THE VIBRATIONS I SET UP CAN TEAR APART ANYTHIN'! I'VE ONLY TRIED ***ONCE***, TA SET UP A SERIES OF INTERNAL QUAKES WITHIN A ***LIVING BODY***, BUT LANDSLIDE STOPPED ME WITH A SHOCKWAVE OF HIS OWN!

THE OUTCAST AN' ME ARE TOO MUCH ALIKE! I SHOULDA KNOWN I COULDN'T TAKE ***HIM*** THAT WAY!

BUT ***YOU***, GREEN-GUMS--YOU'RE ANOTHER STORY ALTOGETHER! I'M GONNA BREAK ***YOUR*** BONES FROM THE ***INSIDE OUT!***

WAVES OF FORCE, WHICH HAVE KNOCKED DOWN WALLS AND SET THE EARTH TO FLOWING LIKE A RIVER, HAMMER REMORSELESSLY AGAINST THE HULK'S BROAD CHEST--

--REMORSELESSLY... AND INEFFECTUALLY.

AVALANCHE REALIZES, TOO LATE, THAT HE SHOULD HAVE ACCEPTED THE LIMITATIONS OF HIS POWER.

INANIMATE OBJECTS --STONE, STEEL-- CRUMBLE AT HIS COMMAND. ANIMATE OBJECTS--THE HULK, FOR INSTANCE--DO NOT.

AVALANCHE'S VIBRATORY FORCE REBOUNDS OFF THE GREEN GOLIATH...

...THE RESULTANT FEEDBACK CAUSING MULTIPLE FRACTURES ALONG EVERY BONE IN THE EARTH-MOVING MUTANT'S ARMS.

OH--

--CRIPES!

AVA-LANCHE IS DOWN!

YOU DID IT, HULK! YOU BEAT HIM AT HIS OWN GAME!

DID HULK'S FRIENDS THINK HULK WOULD LOSE?

NO, I GUESS NOT!

THERE ARE OTHERS, THOUGH, WHO-- SITTING ON THE SIDELINES IN THE HOPE THAT MUTANT AND MONSTER WOULD DESTROY EACH OTHER -- NOW DECIDE THAT THEY HAVE NO OTHER RECOURSE THAN TO ENTER THE FRAY TO SUBDUE THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

KEEP YOUR CAMERAS ROLLING! WE'RE FILMING HISTORY-- THE L.A.P.D.* VERSUS THE HULK!

WEAPONS AT THE READY, MEN! WE'RE TAKING THIS MONSTER DEAD OR ALIVE!

"MONSTER"? DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT THE HULK JUST SAVED YOUR AIRPORT?!

RICK SHOULD SAVE HIS BREATH!

*LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT--AL.

HULK HELPS PUNY HUMANS, AND STILL THEY CALL HULK "MONSTER"! STILL THEY ATTACK HULK! STILL THEY TRY TO HURT HULK!

YOU'RE RIGHT, HULK! --THEY'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND! THEY'LL NEVER EVEN TRY!

TAKE US OUT OF HERE, BIG BUDDY, BEFORE THEY OPEN FIRE!

YES! HULK WILL TAKE RICK AND BETTY AWAY FROM HERE! HULK WILL LEAP FAR AND LONG -- UNTIL HULK AND HULK'S FRIENDS ARE BACK WHERE THEY BELONG!

RIGHT, HULK! WE'RE WITH YOU ALL THE WAY! TAKE US BACK...

...BACK TO WHERE IT ALL BEGAN!

FAREWELL, MONSTER! THOUGH IT HAS EARNED YOU NO THANKS, YOU HAVE SAVED TWO WORLDS!

TURNING INTO THE NIGHT, THE OUTCAST CALLED LANDSLIDE SETS HIS STEPS TOWARD SUBTERRANEA, THE SUB-SURFACE REALM HE HAS MADE HIS HOME.

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE IN THE GREAT SOUTHWESTERN DESERT...

SO! THE HULK IS IN CALIFORNIA -- NEARLY WITHIN MY GRASP!

THE SHADOWED FIGURE DEPRESSES A PANEL SET INTO THE ARM OF HIS THRONE-LIKE CHAIR, AND ANOTHER FIGURE STEPS FORTH FROM THE DARKNESS!

YOU HAVE SUMMONED ME?

I HAVE A TASK FOR YOU! THERE IS ONE WHO -- HIS STRENGTH ADDED TO MY EVIL -- CAN MAKE ME THE ULTIMATE MASTER OF MENACE! YOU MUST DRIVE HIM TO ME! CAN YOU DO IT?

FAILURE WOULD BE AN ADMISSION OF IMPERFECTION --

--THUS, THE NIGHT-FLYER CANNOT FAIL!

THEN, GO! BRING ME THE CREATURE CALLED... THE HULK!

NEXT ISSUE: HE FLIES BY NIGHT! PLUS: OUR MYSTERY VILLAIN REVEALED!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

TM

YOU HURT CHILDREN--

--YOU HURT GIRL--

--NOW HULK WILL HURT *YOU!*

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

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GURU

## HE FLIES BY NIGHT!

DO YOU LIVE, ACT, AND WORSHIP ***PERFECTION?***

YES!

IS ***PERFECTION*** THE POWER OVER LIFE AND DEATH?

***YES!***

THEN I, WHO RESURRECTED YOU, MUST ***BE*** PERFECTION! WILL YOU OBEY ME?

***YES!*** I WILL SEEK OUT AND DESTROY ***THE HULK!***

*SUSPENDED FROM HIS INCREDIBLE HANG-GLIDER, THE NIGHT-FLYER SWOOPS OVER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IN SEARCH OF HIS PREY!*

IT IS A TWISTED, TORTURED LANDSCAPE THAT LIES BELOW THE NIGHT FLYER.

EVERYWHERE I LOOK, I SEE MASSIVE DEVASTATION!

IGNORE IT! YOUR MISSION TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER ALL!

*WROUGHT IN LAST ISSUE'S EPIC DUEL BETWEEN THE HULK, AVALANCHE AND LANDSLIDE-- -- AMIABLE AL.

YES, MY MISSION IS ALL THAT MATTERS!

TO FAIL IN YOUR MISSION WOULD BE TO EMBRACE *IMPERFECTION!*

YOU CAN-NOT LIVE WITH *IMPERFECTION,* CAN YOU?

NO!

OF COURSE YOU CAN'T! TO BE LESS THAN PERFECT MEANS TO BE LESS THAN ALIVE!

SO YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME! SO DO I BELIEVE!

YOU BELIEVE BECAUSE I COMMAND YOU TO BE-LIEVE, AND YOU OBEY BECAUSE IT WAS I WHO BROUGHT YOU BACK FROM THE DEAD!

I NEITHER KNOW NOR CARE WHO IT WAS THAT CREATED YOU-- NOR WHO YOU SERVED IN THE TIME BEFORE I SPIRITED YOUR ASHEN CORPSE AWAY FROM ITS FINAL RESTING PLACE IN THAT S.H.I.E.L.D. LABORATORY/MORGUE! *

I ONLY CARED THAT IN YOU I WOULD HAVE A SERVANT WHO WOULD OBEY ME IN ALL THINGS-- A SLAVE WHO WOULD RISK LIFE AND LIMB TO CARRY OUT MY GRAND DESIGN!

THE MOMENT HAS COME! PROCEED IN YOUR MISSION, NIGHT FLYER! SEEK OUT THE HULK! HARRY AND HOUND HIM! INCREASE HIS IN-CREDIBLE RAGE AND DRIVE HIM BACK HERE TO ME...

...THE CORRUPTOR!

*WHERE THE NIGHT FLYER'S REMAINS WERE DEPOSITED AFTER HIS RUN-IN WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON IN **CA** #214 -- ARCHIVAL AL.

UNQUESTIONINGLY OBEYING THE VOICE ON HIS COMMUNICATOR, AS HE HAS EVER DONE SINCE REGAINING AWARENESS, THE NIGHT FLYER CONTINUES HIS SEARCH FOR THE HULK.

HE IS NEARER THAN HE KNOWS.

RICK SAID HE WANTED HULK TO TAKE RICK AND BETTY AWAY-- BACK TO WHERE IT ALL STARTED!

BUT WE DID NOT GO VERY FAR BEFORE RICK CRIED, "STOP, HULK! LAND HERE!"

HULK WANTS TO KNOW WHY.

BECAUSE, BIG BUDDY, BETTY AND I ARE A LOT MORE FRAGILE THAN YOU! EVERY TIME YOU LEAPED WITH US IN YOUR ARMS, OUR SKELETONS FELT AS IF THEY WERE BEING POUNDED TO POWDER!

THEN WHY DO RICK AND BETTY STAY WITH HULK?

BECAUSE WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS, HULK! WE WANT TO HELP YOU!

HOW? ALL HULK WANTS IS TO BE LEFT ALONE, TO FIND PEACE, TO LIVE SOMEPLACE WHERE BANNER CAN'T FIND HULK!

WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HULK?

HULK KNOWS NOW THAT IT IS BANNER WHO HUNTS HULK -- WHO HOUNDS HULK-- WHO TORMENTS HULK EVEN IN HULK'S SLEEP!

HULK, LISTEN TO ME AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND...

"A LONG TIME AGO THERE WAS A STUPID TEENAGER WHO'D DRIVEN OUT ONTO A GAMMA BOMB TEST SITE ON A DARE!

YOU! GET OUT OF THERE! YOU'RE IN A FORBIDDEN TEST AREA!

COOL IT, MAN! YOU WANT I SHOULD LOSE THE BET?

"THE STUPID TEENAGER WAS DRAGGED FROM HIS JALOPY AND TOSSED INTO A TRENCH JUST AS THE DESERT TURNED GREEN!

THERE! YOU'RE SAFE! AND NOW I'LL...

AHAH!

"THE BRAVE SCIENTIST WHO'D SAVED THE STUPID TEENAGER TOOK THE BRUNT OF THE BLAST!"

SO?

THAT 'BRAVE SCIENTIST' WAS **BRUCE BANNER,** HULK!

YEAH, AND I WAS THE 'STUPID TEENAGER'! BECAUSE OF ME, DOC BANNER ABSORBED AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT OF GAMMA RADIATION!

A-AND BRUCE BANNER-- ONE OF THE KINDEST, GENTLEST, MOST INTELLIGENT MEN I'VE EVER KNOWN!

-- A MAN I'D GROWN TO LOVE FOR HIS INTELLECT AS WELL AS HIS HUMANITY--

-- WAS TRANSFORMED BY THOSE GHASTLY GREEN GAMMA RAYS, HULK...

...INTO **YOU!**

BANNER! **BANNER! BANNER!**

NO! HULK IS **HULK,** NOT BANNER! **NOT** PUNY HUMAN!

YOU'RE WRONG, HULK! YOU'RE **BOTH!**

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN BOTH-- NO MATTER HOW YOU TRY TO HIDE FROM IT OR DENY IT TO YOURSELF!

INSIDE YOUR MONSTER'S BODY THERE'S A MAN SCREAMING TO GET OUT!

WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS, HULK-- AND DOC BANNER'S FRIENDS! WE KNOW THE PAIN BOTH OF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED!

WE WANT TO HELP FREE YOU BOTH!

FREE HULK FROM BANNER?

YES, HULK--AND FREE BRUCE BANNER FROM YOU!

IT'S THE ONLY WAY EITHER OF YOU WILL EVER KNOW PEACE, HULK!

BANNER--HULK! BANNER--HULK! BANNER--HULK!

HULK'S BRAIN IS ON FIRE--FEELS LIKE IT'S SPLITTING IN TWO! WHY DON'T RICK AND BETTY HELP HULK NOW? IF YOU *ARE* HULK'S FRIENDS, WHY DON'T YOU--

--HELP ME? WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY PLEASE *HELP ME*?!

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR, DOC--AND WE WON'T LEAVE UNTIL YOU'RE CURED!

HE'S COLLAPSING, BETTY--BUT WE GOT THROUGH TO THE DOC'S MIND... MADE HIM TRIGGER THE CHANGE!

HE'S EX-HAUSTED, RICK! HE NEEDS REST, FOOD, CLOTHING!

NONE OF WHICH HE'LL GET HERE, IN THIS EARTHQUAKE-SHATTERED TRAIN TUNNEL! TAKE CARE OF HIM, BETTY! I'M GONNA TRY THIS WRIST-RADIO TONY STARK DESIGNED FOR ME AND SEE IF I CAN GET US SOME HELP --

--FROM THE *TEEN BRIGADE, 1981!*

*A SIGNAL GOES OUT AND A LONG WAIT BEGINS.*

*MEANWHILE, IN THE NATIONS CAPITOL...*

SORRY TO SCHEDULE YOU SO LATE AT NIGHT, GENERAL ROSS. THE PRESIDENT WILL SEE YOU NOW.

DANG-BLASTED DECENT OF HIM.

--AFTER SEEING EVERYONE ELSE AND KEEPING ME COOLING MY HEELS ALL DAY!

SINCE THE ASSASINATION ATTEMPT, HE TIRES EASILY, GENERAL!

*GRUMBLING, THE OLD SOLDIER ALLOWS HIMSELF TO BE USHERED INTO THE PRESENCE OF HIS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...*

LT. GENERAL THADDEUS E. ROSS REPORTING, SIR!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU BACK IN UNIFORM, GENERAL. HAVE A JELLY-BEAN.!

NO, THANK YOU, SIR! YES, THE JOINT CHIEFS DECIDED I'D DONE ENOUGH TIME IN RETIREMENT.!

YOU MAKE RETIREMENT SOUND LIKE A PRISON SENTENCE, GENERAL.

PARDON ME, Mr. PRESIDENT, BUT I'M A SOLDIER-- NO GOOD AT POLITICS-- AND I'D LIKE TO BE BLUNT.!

RETIREMENT WAS TORTURE, Mr. PRESIDENT.! I SAT ON THE SIDELINES--

--AND WATCHED AS A JUNIOR OFFICER WHOM I'D GROOMED TO BE ONE OF THIS COUNTRY'S GREAT SOLDIERS LOST HIS LIFE.!

YOU'RE REFERRING TO COL. GLENN TALBOT'S DEATH IN THE WAR WAGON.* I'VE READ THE REPORTS. THEY SAY HE WAS A DESERTER.

COL. TALBOT WAS A SOLDIER DOING HIS DUTY AS HE SAW FIT, Mr. PRESIDENT.!

YOU'VE READ MY REPORT.! THE HULK IS A BERSERKER-- A JUGGERNAUT--LET LOOSE ON AMERICA.! AS LONG AS HE'S FREE, OUR NATIONAL SECURITY IS THREATENED.!

GLENN KNEW THAT AND, DEFYING A DOVISH CONGRESS, WENT AFTER THE HULK ON HIS OWN.!

GENERAL, I'LL BE BLUNT, TOO. BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO REFUND GAMMA BASE OR COMMIT MANPOWER TO HUNTING THE HULK.

BUT I WILL AGREE TO HAVE YOU ASSIGNED TO THE PENTAGON AS AN ADVISER. IF YOU CAN CONVINCE THEM THAT THE HULK'S MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE SOVIETS...

I UNDERSTAND, Mr. PRESIDENT. I'LL SERVE ANY WAY I CAN!

*HIS AUDIENCE OVER, THE INVETERATE HULK-HUNTER TAKES HIS LEAVE.*

*AND, IN CALIFORNIA...*

RICK? RICK JONES?

SPECS? THEN YOU GOT MY MESSAGE?

YES.! THE LOS ANGELES TEEN BRIGADE HAS BEEN MONITORING THE TEEN BRIGADE FREQUENCY FOR YOUR CALL EVER SINCE WE HEARD THAT YOU AND HULK HAD BEEN SIGHTED AT L.A. AIRPORT.!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS CAVE? HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

WE NEED TO GET THE DOC OUT OF THE STATE, SPECS!

THE DOC? HOLY SMOKES! THAT'S *BRUCE BANNER*--THE MAN WHO TURNS INTO THE *HULK!*

YEAH, AND A MAN WHO NEEDS ALL THE HELP--

--AND ALL THE FRIENDS HE CAN GET!

I CAN'T LIE TO YOU, SPECS! BY HELPING THE DOC, YOU MAY BE PLACING YOURSELF IN GRAVE DANGER!

FOR YEARS WE LISTENED TO OUR OLDER BROTHERS RAVE ABOUT THEIR ADVENTURES WITH THE ORIGINAL TEEN BRIGADE!

NOW IT'S OUR TURN!

YOU CAN COUNT ON US, RICK!

"US"?

RIGHT! CANDY--HER NAME'S PRETTY SELF-EXPLANATORY! *WHEELS*--TOUGHEST SKATEBOARD SPEEDSTER IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY; *RIDER*--THE TEN-SPEED TERROR...

...AND ME--*SPECS*! IF *YOU'RE* GOING TO HELP THE HULK, THEN *WE* ARE, TOO!

*SOMETHING IN SPEC'S TONE OF VOICE CONVINCES RICK OF THEIR SINCERITY. HE DOES NOT QUESTION THEIR COMMITMENT.*

HERE'S A WRIST-RADIO FOR EACH OF YOU.

*HE DOES WORRY ABOUT THEIR AGES--AND THE DANGERS HE MAY BE LEADING 'CHILDREN' INTO.*

*IT IS A VALID FEAR, FOR TROUBLE HAS ALREADY FOUND THEM.*

MONITORING OF TEEN BRIGADE TRANSMISSIONS HAS REVEALED THE LOCATION OF MY QUARRY!

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO, NIGHT FLYER?

I MUST NOT FAIL!

...

SPECS!

I SEE IT, SOMEONE DROPPING OUT OF THE SKY AS IF TRYING TO INTERCEPT US!

WHOEVER OR WHATEVER HE IS, HE'S TOSSING SOMETHING TO THE ROAD.

A FRAGMENTATION GRENADE--

PWOM!

SKREECH!

OH, NO! IT CAN'T BE!

IT ALWAYS IS, BETTY! WHEREVER I GO, I'M ALWAYS HUNTED, BY SOMEONE DETERMINED TO CAPTURE OR KILL THE HULK!

THESE CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED... AND ENDANGERED!

WE KNEW THE RISKS, MAN!

IT BEATS PLAYING WITH A RUBIC'S CUBE IN ONE'S BEDROOM NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, DR. BANNER!

THE VAN'S BEEN STOPPED! OUR ATTACKER'S CIRCLING-- PROBABLY TO SEE HOW MANY OF US THERE ARE AND WHETHER WE'RE ARMED!

WOW, WHEN I JOINED THE TEEN BRIGADE, I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE ACTION THIS FAST!

WHO IS THAT HANG-GLIDING WIERDO, AND HOW'D HE FIND US?

I'M BETTING HE MONITORED OUR SECRET TEEN BRIGADE FREQUENCY AND HEARD ME CALLING FOR HELP-- AND THAT'S HOW WE'RE GONNA KEEP HIM OFF THE DOC'S TAIL! SET YOUR WRIST-RADIOS TO TRANSMIT, AND SPREAD OUT ACROSS THE DESERT!

OF COURSE! HE'LL HAVE TO FOLLOW ALL THE SIGNALS, NOT KNOWING WHICH ONE LEADS TO DR. BANNER!

NO! GO HOME, ALL OF YOU! I WON'T HAVE YOU RISKING YOUR LIVES TO SAVE ME!

THAT'S (*PUFF!* *PUFF!*) OUR (*PUFF!*) CHOICE, DR. BANNER!

STAY NEAR ME, CANDY!

WE'RE THE SLOWEST! THAT NIGHT FLYER WILL FIND US FIRST-- BUT HE'LL FIND US TOGETHER!

I'M BETTING I CAN OUT-RIDE ANYTHING ON WHEELS *OR* WINGS!

LET'S SEE THAT NIGHT FLYER CATCH *ME!*

AT HOME, THEY CALL ME THE *'SULTAN OF SKATEBOARDS'!*

NOW I'VE GOT TO PROVE IT WITH SOME FANCY SURFIN'!

RUN, BRUCE!

WE'LL HIDE OUT IN THAT OLD SPANISH MISSION, DOC!

BUT THE CHILDREN-- WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?!

WHY ARE YOU HESITATING?

NIGHT FLYER, WHY DO YOU NOT PRESS YOUR ATTACK?

SIGNALS FROM MANY SOURCES! I DO NOT KNOW WHICH TRANS-MISSION INDICATES THE PRESENCE OF MY QUARRY!

THEN PURSUE EACH ONE UNTIL YOU *DO* KNOW!

YES!

TRUE TO SPEC'S ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION, THE NIGHT FLYER FINDS HIM AND CANDY FIRST.

CANDY, WHEN I SAY THE WORD, HIT THE DIRT!

WH-WHAT'S THE (PUFF! PUFF!) WORD, SPECS?

FIRE!

FRWROOSH!

M-MAMA!

FLAME FROM THE NIGHT FLYER'S FINGERTIPS ILLUMINATES THE NIGHT... AND REVEALS THAT HIS QUARRY IS TO BE FOUND ELSEWHERE.

DO YOU SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE, RICK? THOSE KIDS' LIVES MIGHT BE AT STAKE!

SPECS AND CANDY ARE OKAY! I SEE 'EM! THAT HANG-GLIDING CREEP IS MOVING AWAY!

SPECS!

WHAT IS IT, CANDY?

MY CHOCOLATE BAR'S MELTED!

I'LL BUY YOU ANOTHER ONE-- A WHOLE BOX!

RIDER IS THE NEXT TO FIND HERSELF PURSUED.

THAT SKY-GLIDING SUCKER'S IN FOR A SURPRISE IF HE THINKS HE'S GONNA CATCH THIS GIRL--

--'CAUSE HERE'S WHERE RIDER BREAKS AWAY!

MADE IT! I DUCKED INTO THIS TUNNEL TOO FAST FOR THAT NIGHT FLYER TO TELL IF IT WAS DOC BANNER ON THE BIKE!

NOW EVERY SECOND THAT HE HANGS AROUND WAITING TO FIND OUT, WILL KEEP HIM OFF THE DOC'S TRAIL!

BUT RIDER'S ATTEMPT TO SERVE AS A DECOY FOR BRUCE BANNER, IS CUT SHORT AS A TELESCOPING JAVELIN JAMS BETWEEN HER SPOKES.

OH!

A CHILD! SHE IS NOT MY PREY!

THERE HE GOES-- AFTER WHEELS!

WA-HOO! RIDING THIS RUPTURED FREEWAY IS TOUGHER THAN ANY SKATE-BOARD CIRCUS!

THAT WIERDO'S GOING TO HAVE TO DO SOME FAST FLYING TO CATCH--

--MEEEEEE!

THE HULK, BOY! WHERE IS THE HULK?!

THE VOICE IS COLD-- MURDEROUS.

DANGLING HIGH OVER THE ROCKY TERRAIN, WHEELS KNOWS THAT HE DARE NOT REFUSE TO ANSWER.

THE OLD SPANISH MISSION, MAN! NOW LET ME DOWN EASY-- PLEASE!

RICK AND THE DOC WOULD WANT ME TO TELL! I KNOW THEY WOULD!

THEY WOULDN'T WANT ME TO...DIE!

WHEELS IS, OF COURSE, CORRECT. HE HAS DONE MORE THAN HIS DUTY IN DELAYING PURSUIT.

IT'S SO QUIET OUT ON THE DESERT, NOW.

THOSE KIDS MAY HAVE SACRIFICED THEMSELVES TO SAVE ME. I'VE GOT TO HELP THEM.

BY BECOMING THE HULK AGAIN? THAT'S NO ANSWER! EACH TIME YOU CHANGE, THE PART OF YOU THAT'S BRUCE BANNER BECOMES HARDER TO REACH!

HANG IN THERE! ONCE WE FIND COVER I'LL RADIO THE AVENGERS, AND...

WHERE IS MY QUARRY? WHERE IS THE CREATURE CALLED THE HULK?

THE FIEND HAS FOUND US! HE'S HERE!

HERE!

HERE?

I DO NOT SEE THE HULK AMONG YOU-- BUT I KNOW HE MUST BE NEAR! YOU HIDE HIM AT YOUR OWN RISK!

QUILLS SHOOTING FROM THAT NIGHT FLYER'S FINGERTIPS-- HITTING DOC!

AARGHH!

BRUCE!

THAT IS JUST A SAMPLE OF THE NIGHT FLYER'S POWER! I AM THE PERFECT WEAPON-- THE PERFECT HUNTER! THIS NIGHT I HUNT THE HULK!

IT WOULD RUN CONTRARY TO MY PERFECTION WERE I TO FAIL TO FIND HIM!

YOU'LL FIND HIM ALL RIGHT, YOU MANIAC!

YES-- YOU'LL FIND THE HULK!

RAARGH!

THE MAN BECOMES THE MONSTER?! WHY WAS I NOT TOLD?!

THERE IS NO PUNY *HUMAN* HERE! THERE IS ONLY THE HULK!

AND HULK WILL SMASH!

NO! YOU ARE IMPERFECT, WHILE *I* AM THE PERFECT MAN! I AM CAPABLE OF THINKING AND ACTING MORE SWIFTLY THAN YOU...

WHAT?! YOU SNATCH ME FROM MY GLIDER WITH A SWIFTNESS THAT DEFIES BELIEF!

I WILL ADJUST TO THIS SITUATION--AND TRI-UMPH! IT IS IMPOS-SIBLE FOR PERFECTION TO FAIL!

TALK, TALK, TALK. HULK WILL STOP NIGHT FLYER FROM TALKING--FOREVER!

THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I'D HOPED TO AVOID!

WE'LL *NEVER* BE ABLE TO AVOID SITUATIONS LIKE THIS, RICK--

--NOT SO LONG AS MEN HATE AND HUNT BRUCE FOR BEING THE HULK!

SORRY, RICK! WE TRIED--WE REALLY DID!

YOU ARE STRONG, BRUTE, BUT YOU ARE MINDLESS--

--WHILE I AM THE PERFECT MAN, WITH THE PERFECT PLAN FOR FULFILLING MY MISSION!

ARRGH! FLAMES FROM FLYING MAN'S FINGERS!

YOU HAVE BURNED HULK, FLYING MAN! YOU HAVE HURT HULK! FOR THAT, HULK WILL HURL YOU TO YOUR DOOM!

AS I KNEW YOU WOULD, MONSTER!

HOWEVER, IT IS NOT DEATH TO WHICH YOU HAVE HURLED ME--

--BUT MY EVER-HOVERING HANG-GLIDER!
YOUR UNREASONING REACTION TO PAIN AND ATTACK SUITED MY PURPOSES PERFECTLY!

THUS, YOU HAVE REMOVED ME TO A SAFE VANTAGE POINT--
--FROM WHICH I CAN DRAW RENEWED STRENGTH FROM MY GLIDER TO ATTACK AND ATTACK AGAIN!

YOU ATTACK HULK ON GROUND--YOU ATTACK HULK FROM SKY--BUT ALL YOU DO IS MAKE HULK MAD!
AND THE MADDER HULK GETS, THE STRONGER HULK GETS!

RICK, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING TO STOP THIS?
I'M TRYING, BETTY! I'D HOPED TO GET THE HULK TO TAKE US TO THE DOC'S OLD DESERT LAB WHERE MAYBE WE COULD HELP FIND HIM A CURE!
BUT NOW I REALIZE I GOTTA CALL IN THE AVENGERS! THEY PROMISED TO HELP THE HULK--
--ONLY SOMETHING'S JAMMING MY SIGNAL! I'M NOT GETTING THROUGH!

THAT IS BECAUSE, RICK JONES, I AM NOT YET READY TO PERMIT THE AVENGERS TO BECOME AWARE OF THE HULK'S DILEMMA!
BUT YOU SHALL CALL THEM SOON--
--WHEN, AT MY COMMAND, YOU CALL THEM--TO THEIR DOOM!
IN THE SHADOWS STANDS... THE CORRUPTOR!

MEANWHILE, HIS HANG-GLIDING HENCHMAN FACES AN AWESOMELY ANGRY HULK.
YOU PROPEL YOURSELF HEAVENWARD IN AN IMPERFECT MANNER, MONSTER!
ALL HULK WANTS IS TO REACH FLYING MAN--
14

--AND THEN FLYING MAN WILL SHUT UP ABOUT HOW PERFECT HE IS!

WHAT?! NO! I EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO EASILY DODGE YOUR UPWARD LEAP!

I NEVER THOUGHT YOU MEANT TO JUMP OVER, THEN COME DOWN *ATOP* MY GLIDER!

MISCALCULATION: EQUALS FAILURE TO TAKE ALL POSSIBILITIES INTO CONSIDERATION.

FAILURE: EQUALS IMPERFECTION.

IMPERFECTION IN THE NIGHT FLYER'S CREDO: EQUALS DEATH.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE AIRBORNE ASSASSIN BEGINS TO REALIZE THAT--IN DRIVING THE HULK TO RAGE--HE MAY BE COURTING HIS OWN DESTRUCTION.

MUST OBEY THE COMMAND OF HIM WHO RESURRECTED ME! SUCH IS THE ORDER OF HIM WHO POSSESSES THE POWER OF LIFE OVER DEATH!

THAT POWER IS THE ULTIMATE INDICATION OF PERFECTION!

TO DISOBEY PERFECTION IS IMPOSSIBLE!

THE FIEND IS RISING UP TO ATTACK THE HULK AGAIN! LOOK AT HIM BRISTLING WITH ENERGY!

I-I CAN'T STAND TO SEE BRUCE SUBJECTED TO ANYMORE PUNISHMENT!

BETTY, NO! THE HULK CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF!

CAN HE, BOY? *CAN HE?*

NOT, I THINK AFTER THE CORRUPTOR LAYS HIS HANDS UPON YOUR GREEN-SKINNED GOLIATH!

YOU'VE DAMAGED MY HANG GLIDER, BRUTE--BUT IT STILL FEEDS ITS POWER TO ME! COME, STEP INTO MY ELECTRONIC EMBRACE!

YOU HESITATE? THAT WON'T DO! MY ORDERS ARE TO KEEP YOU ANGRY--TO INCREASE YOUR RAGE!

PERHAPS *THESE* WILL MAKE YOU SEE RED!

THWIP

THWIP

FROM HIDDEN LAUNCHERS ON THE NIGHT-FLYER'S WRISTS STREAK TWO CYLINDERS...

...WHICH EXPAND INTO RAZOR-SHARP JAVELINS GLEAMING IN THE MOONLIGHT!

ONE SHATTERS AGAINST THE HULK'S INCREDIBLE IRON-LIKE HIDE.

THE OTHER SLASHES MERCILESSLY THROUGH THE FRAILER FLESH OF BETTY ROSS AS SHE SEEKS TO INTERPOSE HERSELF BETWEEN THE COMBATANTS.

THE INSTANT SEEMS FROZEN IN TIME, A TABLEAU OF TERROR.

BETTY?

BETTY HURT TRYING TO HELP HULK?

BETTY HURT-- *BY YOU???*

SLOWLY HE TURNS. STEP BY STEP, INCH BY INCH, HE ADVANCES ON THE NIGHT FLYER.

YOU HURT BETTY! YOU!

ATTEMPTING TO DRAW MORE POWER FROM HIS DAMAGED HANG-GLIDER, THE NIGHT FLYER FAILS TO REALIZE...

...THAT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN HIS MISSION BEYOND ANY-ONE'S WILDEST EXPECTATIONS!

HE HAD BEEN RESURRECTED FOR ONE PURPOSE--TO HUNT OUT AND HOUND THE HULK, TO DRIVE THE GREEN GOLIATH TO A PEAK OF RAGE! WHILE HE ATTACKED THE HULK HIMSELF, THE NIGHT FLYER FAILED!

IN HURTING ONE WHOM THE HULK HOLDS DEAR, THE NIGHT FLYER HAS ACHIEVED PERFECTION!

YOU WILL DIE, FLYING MAN!

HULK WILL SMASH YOU!

BUT THERE IS NO NEED! FOR, ADVANCING UPON THE NIGHT FLYER, THE HULK FIRST TEARS HIS ENEMY'S MICRO-CIRCUITRY-RIDDEN HANG-GLIDER INTO TINY LITTLE PIECES.

THE UNEXPLAINED, SYMBIOTIC LINK BETWEEN MAN AND GLIDER IS BROKEN!

THE NIGHT FLYER GOES...

GGLLKKK!

...AND COLLAPSES BEFORE THE HULK EVER LAYS A FINGER ON HIM.

THERE IS A SEARING SURGE OF PHOSPHORESCENCE-- A STENCH LIKE CHARRING SYNTHETIC TISSUE...

... AND THEN THE NEFARIOUS NIGHT-FLYER CEASES TO BE ANYTHING MORE THAN A LIFELESS ASHEN HEAP.

ROBBED OF HIS REVENGE;-- HELPLESS TO AID THE INJURED WOMAN IN HIS ARMS-- THE HULK SCREAMS HIS RAGE TO THE MOONLIT SKY!

THE HULK'S MAD BEYOND ALL REASONING! I DON'T DARE APPROACH HIM TO HELP BETTY! I'VE GOTTA GET THROUGH TO THE AVENGERS BECAUSE THERE'S NO WAY I CAN CONTROL OL' GREENSKIN NOW...

NO, BUT AT LAST I CAN!

A VOICE-- AS COLD AS THE CRYPT!

AN APPROPRIATE ALLUSION, FOR WORDS SPOKEN BY... THE **CORRUPTOR!**

HE'S... BLUE!

AND COLD!

HE'S PASSING BY US LIKE WE DON'T EXIST!

WHO IS HE? WHAT DOES HE WANT?

HE WANTS THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

**RARGH!**

SOME TIME AGO AN ACCIDENTAL IMMERSION IN A CHEMICAL BATH GRANTED ME THE POWER TO ALTER MEN'S MENTAL STATES! *

I FOUND THAT ALL I HAD TO DO WAS TOUCH THEM, AND THEY BECAME MINE TO COMMAND--MINE TO CONTROL...

...AND TOTALLY, IRREDEEMABLY PRONE TO ACTS OF UTTER, ABYSMAL *EVIL!*

*NOVA #4--AL.

THE POWER WAXED AND WANED, HOWEVER, UNTIL I LEARNED A SECRET ABOUT IT UNKNOWN EVEN TO ME! MY '*EVIL TOUCH*' WAS TEMPORARY--

--UNLESS MY VICTIMS WERE FIRST DRIVEN INTO A HEIGHTENED EMOTIONAL STATE SUCH AS LOVE, OR FEAR...

...OR RAGE!

SOMETHING... HAPPENS.

SOME SUBTLE REORDERING OF THE HULK'S BIOCHEMISTRY

SOME INDESCRIBABLE CHANGE.

UNTIL THERE IS NO MOTIVATING FORCE IN CONTROL OF THE HULK...

...SAVE THE CORRUPTOR'S SOUL-NUMBING **EVIL!**

LOOK AT THE HULK, RICK! LOOK AT HIS **FACE!**

I SEE IT, RIDER--LIKE SOME HORRIBLE, HOWLING CREATURE FROM THE DEPTHS!

BUT THE HULK STILL HAS BRUCE BANNER'S HUMANITY--THE DOC'S COMPASSION AND MORALITY!

MAYBE IF I CAN REACH HIM BEFORE THE CORRUPTOR'S CONTROL IS COMPLETE, I CAN SOMEHOW BREAK THE SPELL!

YOU CANNOT!

THE NIGHT FLYER SERVED MY PURPOSES BY DRIVING THE HULK INTO SUCH A STATE OF RAGE THAT THE MINDLESS MONSTER WAS SUSCEPTIBLE TO MY '**EVIL TOUCH**'!

THE HULK NOW OBEYS ONLY ME!

BACK! GET AWAY FROM CORRUPTOR!

HULK-- IT'S ME! RICK JONES!

BACK!

WH- WHAT DO WE DO NOW, RICK?

WE'VE GOTTA REACH THE AVENGERS! ONLY THEY HAVE THE POWER TO DEAL WITH AN EVIL HULK!

DO THEY HAVE THE POWER? LOOK INTO THE JADE GREEN EYES OF MY CREATURE, BOY!

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN SUCH RAGE? SUCH EVIL?

CALL YOUR PRECIOUS AVENGERS, BOY--USE YOUR PITIABLE WRIST-RADIO, WHOSE SIGNAL I HAD JAMMED ERE NOW, AND SUMMON EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES LIKE LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER!

YOU HESITATE, BOY? DO YOU AT LEAST REALIZE THAT IT IS THE BLOOD OF THE AVENGERS I *WANT!* DRIVEN TO BATTLE A RAMPAGING HULK, THEY TOO WOULD REACH EMOTIONAL STATES WHICH WOULD MAKE THEM SUSCEPTIBLE TO MY CONTROL!

YOU'RE SERIOUS! YOU MEAN TO TURN THE AVENGERS EVIL AS WELL AS THE HULK! NO WAY, CORRUPTOR! I'LL DIE BEFORE I CALL THEM HERE!

CALL THEM, BOY-- OR THIS WOMAN IN MY ARMS MOST ASSUREDLY *WILL* DIE!

BETTY--?!



NEXT ISSUE: LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO SUMMON THE AVENGERS TO THEIR DOOM, RICK JONES WILL DISCOVER THAT WHILE YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT, IF YOU TRY SOMETIMES YOU JUST MIGHT FIND...

...YOU GET WHAT YOU NEED!

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

TM

THE GREEN-SKINNED GARGANTUA BATTLES THE BEST OF THE WEST...

THE RANGERS

MILGROM

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

BILL MANTLO & SAL BUSCEMA WRITER - ***STORYTELLERS*** - ARTIST ✱ ALBERS & SIMEK, LETTERS BOB SHAREN, COLORS ✱ AL MILGROM EDITOR ✱ JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

IN A SECRET LABORATORY HIDDEN BENEATH AN OLD SPANISH MISSION, THOSE WHO WOULD HELP THE HULK WILL SOON DISCOVER...

**YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT, BUT IF YOU TRY SOMETIME YOU JUST MIGHT FIND YOU GET WHAT YOU NEED!**

SPECIAL THANKS TO ***MARK GRUENWALD,*** CO-CREATOR OF THE ***RANGERS,*** WITHOUT WHOSE HELP THIS STORY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN TOLD!

YOUR ***TEEN BRIGADE*** IS AT MY MERCY, RICK JONES! YOUR INCREDIBLE ***HULK*** IS IN MY POWER! GAZE INTO HIS EMERALD EYES, AND KNOW THAT IT IS FOLLY TO DEFY THE ***CORRUPTOR!***

BLOW IT OUT YOUR WAZOO, CORRUPTOR! NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO TO ME... I ***WON'T SUMMON THE AVENGERS!***

THAT'S TELLING HIM RICK!

LET'S BE HONEST, PILGRIMS-- AS FAR AS 265th ISSUES GO, THIS ONE'S A REAL HUMDINGER!

I KNOW OF YOU, RICK JONES--KNOW THAT YOU HAVE OFT SHARED DANGER WITH THE VERY HEROES YOU WILL NOW HELP ME TO DOMINATE!

*YOU* DO NOT FEAR TO DIE, BUT CAN YOU LET THESE *CHILDREN* YOU BROUGHT WITH YOU SUFFER?

THE *TEEN BRIGADE?*

THAT BLUE-SKINNED DUDE IS TALKING ABOUT SNUFFING US IF RICK DOESN'T COOPERATE, SPECS!

RICK WILL THINK OF SOME WAY OUT, WHEELS --HE'S GOT TO!

I WANNA GO HOME!

MS. ROSS, ARE-- ARE WE REALLY IN DANGER OF... DYING?

I--I DON'T KNOW, RIDER!

OH, RICK--I TOLD YOU WE HAD NO RIGHT INVOLVING CHILDREN IN OUR QUEST FOR THE HULK!

SHALL I TURN YOUR ERST-WHILE EMERALD COMPANION LOOSE UPON YOUR FRIENDS, RICK JONES, OR WILL YOU DO AS I DEMAND?

ANSWER, BOY

I ALREADY TOLD YOU WHERE TO STICK IT, CORRUPTOR!

*HULK-- FORWARD!*

*AGGH!* M-MY RIBS!

HULK-- IT'S ME, YOUR PAL, RICK JONES! SNAP OUT OF THE CORRUPTOR'S SPELL!

BOY WILL DO AS CORRUPTOR SAYS, OR HULK WILL CRUSH!

YOU CANNOT WIN THE HULK OVER WITH WORDS, BOY! DO YOU NOT REMEMBER HOW MY PAWN-- THE NIGHT FLYER--DROVE THE HULK TO SUCH A PITCH OF RAGE THAT HE BECAME SUSCEPTIBLE TO CONTROL VIA MY 'EVIL TOUCH'?*

HE IS MINE TO COMMAND-- AND MINE ALONE!

WELL, BOY? SHALL I HAVE THE HULK DO TO YOUR PROTEGÉS WHAT HE DID TO THE NIGHT FLYER--

*OUR LAST TITANIC ISH--AL.

--OR WILL YOU USE YOUR TEEN BRIGADE WRIST RADIO TO SUMMON THE AVENGERS INTO MY TRAP?

S-SO THAT, FIGHTING THE HULK, THE AVENGERS, TOO, WILL REACH THE EMOTIONAL STATES THAT'LL MAKE 'EM SUBJECT TO YOUR 'EVIL TOUCH'?

SO THAT YOU'D CONTROL NOT ONLY THE HULK-- BUT EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES AS WELL?

I-I CAN'T DO IT...!

2

BUT I MUST! YOU WIN, CORRUPTOR! I-I CAN'T RISK THE LIVES OF THE TEEN BRIGADE! THOUGH I'M SUMMONING THEM INTO YOUR TRAP, I'M GAMBLING THAT THE AVENGERS WILL TRIUMPH OVER YOU...AND THE HULK!

RATIONALIZE YOUR CAPITULATION HOWEVER YOU LIKE, RICK JONES, BUT STILL IT SHALL BE YOUR VOICE--

--WHICH LURES THE AVENGERS TO THEIR DOOM!

OH, WOW!

RICK'S DOING IT--HE'S SENDING THE EMERGENCY CALL!

HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY CHOICE!

HE HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ENDANGERING THE AVENGERS OR US!

WILL THE CORRUPTOR NOW SPARE THE TEEN BRIGADE? OR, HAVING GOTTEN WHAT HE WANTS---

-- WILL HE DECIDE THAT THEY HAVE OUTLIVED THEIR USEFULNESS AS HOSTAGES?

BETTY ROSS HAS EVERY REASON TO WORRY, FOR THE CONCEPTS OF HONOR AND MERCY ARE ALIEN TO THE UTTERLY EVIL CORRUPTOR.

BUT, AS THE FATEFUL SUMMONS GOES FORTH, SOMETHING OCCURS WHICH NOT EVEN THE CORRUPTOR HAS COUNTED ON.

RICK JONES CALLING AVENGERS! RICK JONES

CALLING AVENGERS!

THE INSTRUMENT-LINED WALLS OF THE OLD SPANISH MISSION, THAT THE CORRUPTOR HAS MADE HIS STRONGHOLD, MUTE THE WRIST RADIO'S SIGNAL...

COLORADO

UTAH

NE

M

ARIZONA

CALI-FORNIA

...SO THAT, RATHER THAN REACHING AVENGERS MANSION IN NEW YORK CITY, 3,000 MILES AWAY, ITS RANGE IS RESTRICTED TO CALIFORNIA AND ITS NEIGHBORING SOUTHWESTERN STATES.

THUS IT IS, THAT THE WEAKENED BROADCAST SIGNAL NEVER PASSES THE WESTERN SLOPES OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS...

...A FACT WHICH, MERCIFULLY, REMAINS UNKNOWN TO THE CORRUPTOR AND HIS CAPTIVES.

ALL RIGHT, BLUEBERRY-PUSS--I'VE DONE YOUR DIRTY DEED! NOW LET BETTY AND THE TEEN BRIGADE GO!

WHEN THE AVENGERS HAVE MADE THEIR APPEARANCE--FOUGHT THEIR GOOD FIGHT--AND FALLEN VICTIM TO MY 'EVIL TOUCH'... PERHAPS!

YOU LOUSY--! THEY'RE JUST KIDS! THEY'RE SCARED! HAVEN'T YOU GOT ANY HUMAN DECENCY?

NOT AN OUNCE!

AND SO THE NERVE-WRACKING WAIT BEGINS FOR A SUPER-TEAM...THAT WILL NEVER COME.

HOWEVER, FATE HAS A STRANGE WAY OF ARRANGING FOR SUBSTITUTES...

.... IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA, FOR INSTANCE.

POW POW PTOW

THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS JEEP BOUNCES AND JOLTS ON THE DIRT ROAD LEADING OUT OF THE MOHAWK INDIAN RESERVATION. IT IS PROBABLY THAT LACK OF PAVING THAT HAS THUS FAR KEPT B.I.A. POLICEMAN, JEREMIAH WINDRACER, ALIVE.

THE BULLETS OF THE ANGLO* DRUG-RUNNERS MISS ME-- BUT I DARE NOT STOP MY JEEP TO RETURN THEIR FIRE!

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

IF THEY ESCAPE THE RESERVATION, THEY ESCAPE MY JURISDICTION! I MUST HEAD THEM OFF!

*ANGLOS: INDIAN WORD FOR WHITE SKINNED NON INDIANS--AL..

JEREMIAH WINDRACER DESPAIRS OF OVERTAKING THE PUSHERS WHO PREY ON THE CHILDREN OF THE RESERVATION WHEN, AT THE VERY EDGE OF THE INDIAN LANDS...

TRIGGER! THERE'S AN INDIAN WATCHING US FROM THE RIDGE!

SO WHAT? LET HIM WATCH!

DOWN, LOBO!

BUT HE DOES MORE THAN JUST WATCH. HE IS RED WOLF! HE FEARS NOTHING.

SONNUVA--! LOOK OUT!

A-A WOLF!

GRARR!

SKREEEEEE

AWAY, LOBO!

SECONDS LATER...

YOU STOPPED THE ANGLOS, RED WOLF!

THEIR OWN FEAR WAS THEIR UNDOING!

TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY, JEREMIAH WINDRACER! THE WHITE POWDER WITH WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE POISONED OUR PEOPLE, LIES STREWN ACROSS THE ROAD!

IT SHALL BE THE EVIDENCE WE PRESENT AGAINST THEM!

SUDDENLY, OVER THE JEEP'S POLICE RADIO...

RICK JONES CALLING AVENGERS-- EMERGENCY...

STRANGE! AN EMERGENCY CALL ON THE B.I.A. FREQUENCY--!

SOMEHOW YOUR RADIO INTERCEPTED A CALL MEANT FOR OTHERS, FAR DISTANT... THE MIGHTY AVENGERS!

WINDRACER, I HAVE NEED OF YOUR JEEP!

SKREE

TAKE IT, RED WOLF, WITH MY GRATITUDE! I WILL WALK THESE ANGLO SCUM BACK TO THE STOCKADE! BUT WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO ANSWER A CALL FOR HELP! FOR I WAS ONCE PROUD TO CALL MYSELF... AN *AVENGER!*

*FIRST FORCE SET IN MOTION.*

*BUENAVISTA: AN OPTIMISTIC NAME FOR A DIRT-POOR MEXICAN AMERICAN VILLAGE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO.*

BUENAS NOCHES, SEÑORITA JUAREZ.

BUENAS NOCHES, SEÑORA HIDALGO.

IS YOUR NIÑO-- YOUR SON, JUAN-- AT HOME?

OH, SI, SEÑORITA! HE USED TO RUN AROUND NIGHTS WITH A TOUGH GANG-- BUT NOW HE STAYS HOME WITH THE HAM RADIO SET YOUR ORGANIZATION BOUGHT FOR HIM!

"PROJECT RECOVERY" BELIEVES IN DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF OUR CHILDREN. JUAN ALWAYS HAD AN APTITUDE FOR ELECTRONICS. EH?

*RICK JONES CALLING THE AVENGERS! HELP!*

THE AVENGERS? THE ANGLO SUPER HEROES? MADRE DE DIOS, JUAN HAS NEVER RECEIVED A CALL LIKE THAT BEFORE!

IT CAME FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, SEÑORITA JUAREZ!

CALIFORNIA, JUAN? PLEASE EXCUSE ME, SEÑORA HIDALGO. I HAVE MANY OTHER FAMILIES TO SEE TONIGHT.

VAYA CON DIOS.

VAYA CON DIOS, SEÑORITA JUAREZ!

THERE ARE NO OTHER STOPS SOCIAL WORKER JUAREZ NEEDS TO MAKE THIS NIGHT.

SHE MERELY NEEDED TO GET AWAY TO ANSWER THE CALL WHICH CAME CRACKLING OVER JUAN HILDALGO'S RADIO SET.

A DESPERATE--TERRIFIED CALL! FROM SOMEONE IN TROUBLE--IN NEED OF THE AVENGERS!

BUT NEW YORK IS SO FAR AWAY! HELP MAY NEVER ARRIVE IN TIME--IF AT ALL!

PERHAPS THIS IS THE SIGN--THE PURPOSE--FOR WHICH I HAVE BEEN WAITING SINCE THE DAY I BECAME...

...FIREBIRD!

AS BONITA JUAREZ TRANSFORMS INTO SOMETHING SUPER-HUMAN, A GREAT, BLAZING BIRD-FORM SEEMS TO RISE UP INTO THE NIGHT.

THEN THE SCREAMING FIRE-FORM IS SUBSUMED INTO THE COSTUMED FIGURE OF THE WOMAN CALLED FIREBIRD.

AGAIN I KNOW THE FREEDOM--THE ECSTASY--OF FLIGHT!

NEVER HAVE I EXPERIENCED SUCH TOTAL JOY!

IT SEEMS ALMOST... SINFUL!

BUT I DID NOTHING TO ACQUIRE SUCH POWERS SAVE TO BE WALKING ALONE OUT ON THE DESERT ON THAT NIGHT WHEN THE FIRE DROPPED FROM THE HEAVENS, AND TOUCHED ME WITH A POWER THE LIKES OF WHICH I HAD NEVER KNOWN!

AT FIRST I THOUGHT THE FIRE TO BE THE DEVIL'S WORK!

I ALMOST CONFESSED TO FATHER RAMIREZ!

BUT NOW I UNDERSTAND THE FIRE TO BE A VIRTUOUS POWER--A FORCE FOR GOOD--AND FOR GOOD SHALL I USE IT BY ANSWERING THAT URGENT APPEAL FOR HELP..

...AS ONLY FIREBIRD CAN!

NEXT STOP: A LATE-NIGHT RODEO OUTSIDE OF PASADENA, CALIFORNIA.

THE SHOW'S TWO TOP-BILLED ATTRACTIONS HAVE HELD THE AUDIENCE TO THE LAST.

CODY'S RODEO EXTRAVAGANZA

WHIP THOSE NIGHTWINDS, TEXAS TWISTER!

THAT'S MY JOB, SHOOTIN' STAR!

DREW DANIELS AND VICTORIA STAR ARE TWO PERFORMERS WITH VERY SPECIAL POWERS. THE RUBES LAP UP HIS ABILITY TO TWIRL LIKE A TORNADO, AND HER STELLAR MARKSMANSHIP.

HOWEVER, BEING AMBITIOUS, THE PAIR IS LESS THAN PLEASED WITH THE DIRECTION THEIR CAREERS HAVE THUS FAR TAKEN.

A LOUSY THOUSAND DOLLARS!

WE DRAW FIVE TIMES THE CROWD THIS SHOW GOT BEFORE WE CAME HERE, CODY!

YOU SIGNED CONTRACTS, KIDS-- AN' I'M HOLDIN' YA TO 'EM!

PAYMASSTER

BUT FATE, CASTING ITS NET FAR AND WIDE THIS EVENING, HAS JUST ENSNARED TEXAS TWISTER AND SHOOTING STAR.

STAR! LISSEN TA THIS!

RICK JONES CALLING THE AVENGERS! HELD IN OLD SPANISH MISSION! EMERGENCY!

SO?

SO HERE'S WHERE WE SHAKE THE DUST OF THIS ONE-HORSE RODEO, DARLIN'

--AN' MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES AS GEN-U-INE SUPER HEROES, BY SHOWIN' UP TA SAVE THE DAY BEFORE THE AVENGERS!

IF WE PULL THIS OFF, WHY, WITH THE RIGHT PROMOTION, TEXAS TWISTER AN' SHOOTING STAR COULD WIND UP MAKIN' THEMSELVES A MINT!

CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS ARE FORGOTTEN AS THEY TAKE TO THE SKY.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, ON THE SANDS OF DEATH VALLEY, CALIFORNIA...

THESE INDIAN ARTIFACTS I'VE UNCOVERED WILL OPEN A WHOLE NEW FIELD OF EARLY AMERICAN STUDIES...

SUDDENLY, ARCHAEOLOGIST HAMILTON SLADE IS STAGGERED BY A PSYCHIC APPEAL FOR HELP.

RICK JONES CALLING AVENGERS! EMERGENCY!

S-SOME-ONE IN NEED...!

THREATENED BY EVIL!

M-MUST GO TO THEM, NOT AS HAMILTON SLADE...

...BUT AS-- THE NIGHT RIDER!

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, HAMILTON SLADE'S GREAT-GREAT-GRAND-FATHER RODE THE WESTERN PLAINS AS A COSTUMED VIGILANTE.

A HUNDRED YEARS LATER, THE SPIRIT OF THE ORIGINAL NIGHT RIDER POSSESSES HIS DESCENDANT IN TIMES OF DANGER.

SCARCELY AWARE OF WHAT HE HAS BECOME, HAMILTON SLADE DONS THE NIGHT RIDER'S PALE UNIFORM AND, COMMANDING SUPERNATURAL POWERS...

... SUMMONS FORTH THE GHOSTLY DEMON-HORSE, BANSHEE.

TOGETHER, THEY RIDE THE NIGHT WINDS!

WHERE EVIL BECKONS, THERE RIDES...THE NIGHT RIDER!

RED WOLF

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

JEB-403

FIREBIRD

THUS, FROM DIFFERENT CORNERS OF THE GREAT AMERICAN SOUTHWEST, FIVE BEINGS, POSSESSED OF SUPER-HUMAN POWERS AND ABILITIES, COME TOGETHER TO ANSWER A DESPERATE APPEAL FOR AID. NOT AS INDIVI-DUALS. BUT AS...

TEXAS TWISTER

SHOOTING STAR

...THE RANGERS

NIGHT RIDER

MEANWHILE, UNAWARE THAT RICK JONES' CALL HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY BEINGS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE FOR WHOM THE MESSAGE WAS INTENDED, THE EVIL ENTITY KNOWN AS THE CORRUPTOR BEGINS TO LOSE ALL PATIENCE.

WHY DO THE AVENGERS NOT RESPOND, BOY? IF YOU ARE TRYING SOME MANNER OF TRICK--!

I SENT THE CALL LIKE YOU SAID, CORRUPTOR! IF THE AVENGERS DON'T ANSWER MAYBE IT MEANS THEY'RE NOT HOME!

*LIAR!* SUCH A SUPER-TEAM WOULD NEVER LEAVE THEIR COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT UNMONITORED! IT IS *YOU* WHO HAVE NOT CODED YOUR CALL CORRECTLY!

HULK!

BOY WILL DO AS CORRUPTOR SAYS--

--OR HULK WILL SMASH BOY!

THERE IS NO RECOGNITION IN THE GREEN GOLIATH'S EYES THAT RICK JONES IS HIS FRIEND, HIS COMPANION OF COUNTLESS ADVENTURES.

NO, ALL THAT BURNS IN THE HULK'S EMERALD EYES IS HATE AND UTTER EVIL, INSTILLED THERE BY THE CHEMICAL TOUCH OF THE CORRUPTOR...

...WHO, AS HIS VERY NAME IMPLIES, POSSESSES THE POWER TO CORRUPT THE SOULS OF MEN... OR MONSTERS.

RICK!

HULK--ALMOST--KILLED ME! HE'S COMIN' AT ME AGAIN, TO FINISH THE JOB!

HE DOESN'T EVEN REMEMBER HOW I WAS TRYING TO HELP HIM! HOW **I** STUCK WITH HIM WHEN THE WHOLE WORLD WAS AGAINST HIM!

HE BELONGS TO THE CORRUPTOR NOW--BODY AND SOUL!

SNARRRL

AND SO SHALL THE AVENGERS BELONG TO ME--SO SHALL THEY SERVE ME! IF YOUR CALL CANNOT BRING THEM--

--THEN PERHAPS THEY WILL COME WHEN THEY HEAR MY VOICE TELLING THEM THAT RICK JONES IS *DEAD!*

RICK, THERE'S MURDER IN THE HULK'S EYES! HE'S GOING TO DO AS THE CORRUPTOR COMMANDS! HE'S GOING TO KILL YOU! RUN!

I GOT YOU AND THE TEEN BRIGADE INTO THIS MESS, BETTY! I CAN'T ABANDON YOU TO DIE!

I CAN'T LOOK!

*SUDDENLY, AN EERIE APPARITION MATERIALIZES THROUGH THE VERY WALLS OF THE CORRUPTOR'S HIDDEN LABORATORY...*

THE WAVES OF FEAR WHICH DREW NIGHT RIDER TO THIS EARTHLY PLANE--

--EMANATE FROM THIS PLACE... FROM THAT YOUTH MENACED BY A GARGANTUAN GREEN MONSTER!

*THERE IS NO CRASH OF GUNFIRE AS THE NIGHT RIDER SHOOTS HIS WEAPON. INSTEAD, SOUNDLESS SHAFTS OF SPECTRAL LIGHT STRIKE THE HULK!*

*THE PHANTOM BULLETS CAUSE THE JADE GIANT TO SCREAM IN PAIN.*

IF THIS BE AN AVENGER, IT IS ONE OF WHOM I HAVE NEVER HEARD!

I AM THE *NIGHT RIDER*, SINISTER ONE--

--AND IT IS IN RESPONSE TO THE EVIL I SENSE IN YOU, THAT I HAVE COME!

BUT FIRST, YOUR MONSTROUS SERVANT MUST BE DEALT WITH!

KICK, BANSHEE!

*SPECTRAL HOOVES FLASH OUT AND STRIKE WITH ALL-TOO-PHYSICAL FORCE.*

ARRGHH!

PROPELLED BY THE KICK OF THE NIGHT RIDER'S SUPERNATURAL STEED, THE INCREDIBLE HULK HURTLES HEADLONG THROUGH THE WALL OF THE MISSION!

HE RISES, SNARLING, TO CARRY OUT THE CORRUPTOR'S LAST COMMAND: TO KILL RICK JONES DESPITE THE GHOSTLY RIDER BARRING HIS PATH.

THAT IS WHEN THE RANGERS FINALLY ARRIVE!

THE CALL FOR HELP CAME FROM THIS OLD SPANISH MISSION!

LOBO AND I HAVE DRIVEN ALL NIGHT TO STAND BY THE SIDE OF OUR FELLOW AVENGERS!

BUT WHO ARE THESE STRANGERS WE SEE ASSEMBLED?

SHOOTIN' STAR AN' ME WERE THINKIN' OF ASKIN' *YOU* THE SAME THING, REDSKIN!

NONE OF THAT MATTERS NOW, TWISTER! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THE MENACE THE MESSAGE REFERRED TO... WAS THE ***HULK?!***

RAAARRGHH!

TEEN BRIGADE, CHECK IT OUT! THE CAVALRY HAS ARRIVED!

THAT'S NOT THE AVENGERS, WHEELS!

RICK, IT'S SOME *OTHER* GROUP OF SUPER HEROES WHO MUST HAVE SOMEHOW INTERCEPTED YOUR CALL!

THEY DON'T KNOW THE POWER OF THE HULK LIKE THE AVENGERS DO!

THEY'LL BE KILLED!

BETTER YET, IN BATTLING THE HULK THEY SHALL REACH A PLATEAU OF FEAR WHICH WILL MAKE *THEM* SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE CORRUPTOR'S TOUCH!

THEY, TOO, SHALL SERVE ME-- THUS INCREASING THE POWER I COMMAND!

GO, HULK! MAKE THEM FEARFUL! MAKE THEM MINE!

YOU FOUR WHO STAND BESIDE ME-- BEWARE! I HAVE HEARD AWESOME TALES OF THE STRENGTH OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK-- TALES TOLD ME WHEN I FOUGHT BESIDE THE MIGHTY *AVENGERS*!

GRRR

WE CAN SEE HE AIN'T EXACTLY GOIN' TA BE A PUSHOVER, REDSKIN!

PERHAPS IF WE FIGHT HIM TOGETHER... AS A TEAM?

HOW 'BOUT IF WE DON'T FIGHT HIM AT *ALL*, DARLIN'? I MEAN, WE CAME OUT HERE TA MAKE A *NAME* FOR OURSELVES-- NOT TA GET OURSELVES KILLED!

FLEE IF YOU WISH, ANGLOS!

RED WOLF CAME IN RESPONSE TO A CALL FOR HELP--

--AND HELP HE *WILL*!

RARRR

FOR SUCH A PURPOSE DID THE OWAYODATA-- THE WOLF-SPIRIT WORSHIPPED BY MY TRIBE-- FILL ME WITH THE POWER OF THE ORIGINAL RED WOLF! *

*AS RECOUNTED IN THE CLASSIC *AVENGERS* #80--ARCHIVAL AL.

HULK HEARD INDIAN SAY INDIAN WAS ONCE AN AVENGER! HULK WAS AN AVENGER, TOO! *

BUT AVENGERS TURNED ON HULK! HULK HATES ALL AVENGERS! HULK WILL SMASH THEM ALL!

*AN ORIGINAL AVENGER, IN FACT-- AL.

INCREASED BY MY 'EVIL TOUCH' THE HULK'S RAGE IS MORE SAVAGE, MORE BESTIAL THAN EVER-- AND THE MADDER THE HULK GETS, THE STRONGER HE GETS!

NOTHING CAN STOP MY SAVAGE SERVANT FROM CARRYING OUT THE CORRUPTOR'S COMMANDS!

TWISTER, AH DON'T BELIEVE WE ARE GOIN' TO MAKE THAT FORTUNE Y'ALL WERE TALKING ABOUT, FIGHTING THE HULK!

I THINK YER RIGHT, DARLIN'! I LEARNED THE LIMITS OF MY POWER--

-- WHEN I WAS FOOL ENOUGH TA GO UP AGAINST CAPTAIN AMERICA AN' THE HUMAN TORCH! *

*CA #229, & FF #192 -- AL.

IF YOU ANGLOS WILL NOT USE YOUR POWERS TO HELP THAT RED BROTHER--

-- FIREBIRD SHALL!

FROOSH

ARRGHH! HULK BURNS! BURNS!

EASY, REDSKIN! THE TORNADO WINDS OF THE TEXAS TWISTER ARE COMIN' TA YER RESCUE!

ACTING INSTINCTIVELY, ONE HESITANT HERO JOINS THE FRAY.

WE ARE SAVED, LOBO! THE ANGLO IS, THEN, OF SOME USE!

THE HULK'S TURNING TOWARDS TWISTER AN' THE INDIAN! AH'VE GOT TO USE MY SHOOTING STARS TO DISTRACT THE MONSTER!

IT IS WORKING, SHOOTING STAR! THE HULK IS TURNING FROM RED WOLF AND TEXAS TWISTER--TOWARDS US!

FIRST FIRE-- NOW STARS AS COLD AS ICE! THEY MAKE HULK'S BLOOD FREEZE!

MY DADDY HAD THESE STAR-SHOOTING SIX-GUNS INVENTED TO ADD TO MY OTHER STELLAR-POWERS-- BUT I NEVER FIGURED TO USE 'EM FOR ANYTHING OUTSIDE THE RODEO!

I HAD NO 'RICH DADDY' BUYING MY WAY OUT OF THE GHETTO! MY FIRE-POWER CAME FROM HEAVEN!

BUT PERHAPS, SINCE WE BOTH USE OUR POWERS FOR GOOD, WE SHALL BOTH BE BLESSED!

NO! FOR HURTING HULK, STAR-GIRL AND FIRE-GIRL WILL ONLY BE *SMASHED!*

THROOM!

DRIVEN BY THE PILE-DRIVING FISTS OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK, THE DESERT SANDS SLAM AT THE STARTLED SUPER HEROINES LIKE A SOLID WALL OF FORCE.

THE MEX-CHICK, FIREBIRD, HAS BEEN KNOCKED SENSELESS!

I'M THE ONLY ONE CLOSE ENOUGH TO KEEP HER FROM SPLATTERIN' ALL OVER THE DESERT FLOOR!

TEXAS TWISTER COMES TO THE RESCUE, BUT HIS THOUGHTS ARE ON SHOOTING STAR-- A LADY WHOM, IT CAN BE SAFELY SURMISED, HE CARES FOR MORE THAN A LITTLE.

INDEED, IF ANYONE NEEDS SAVING, IT IS THE STELLAR SHARP-SHOOTER.

DAZED, SHE IS UNABLE TO MARSHAL HER POWERS TO HELP HERSELF.

HAVE NO FEAR, MAIDEN! THE NIGHT RIDER SHALL NOT ALLOW YOU TO COME TO HARM!

WHERE IN BLAZES DID *YOU* POP UP FROM?

BANSHEE AND I ARRIVED JUST IN ADVANCE OF YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS AND ENGAGED THE HULK!

ALONE? THAT TAKES MOXIE, RIDER!

AH *LIKE* MOXIE!

STAR'S FLIRTIN' WITH THAT SPOOK! BLASTED FILLY, IF TAKIN' ON THE HULK IS WHAT IMPRESSES HER--

--THEN TEXAS TWISTER'LL TACKLE THAT WALKIN' GREEN GARBAGE TRUCK... TORNADO-STYLE!

AIR IS BEING PULLED OUT OF HULK'S LUNGS!

HULK CAN'T BREATHE!

THAT'S THE IDEA! YOU'RE GOIN' TA BE EASIER TA BEAT THAN I--! *AKKK!* MY ANKLE!

*IN HIS EAGERNESS TO IMPRESS SHOOTING STAR, THE JEALOUS TWISTER HAS BECOME TOO COCKY... COME TOO CLOSE...*

*HE HAS JUST LEARNED A MOST VALUABLE LESSON...*

*...NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE INCREDIBLE HULK!*

GO AWAY, SPINNING MAN! HULK WILL WASTE NO MORE TIME WITH YOU!

HULK MUST KILL RICK JONES AS THE CORRUPTOR HAS COMMANDED!

TWISTER'S HURT! AH'VE GOT TO GO TO HIM!

WHILE I MUST AGAIN ENTER THE CONFLICT AGAINST THE HULK!

ON, BANSHEE!

*AT THE NIGHT RIDER'S COMMAND, THE SUPERNATURAL STEED LEAPS FOWARD... TURNING INTANGIBLE IN THE PROCESS, MUCH TO SHOOTING STAR'S DISCOMFORT.*

WHUNFF!

AH'VE RIDDEN MORE TRICK PONIES IN MY RODEO ACT THAN I CARE TO NAME-- BUT THAT'S THE FIRST TIME AH'VE BEEN THROWN FROM A *GHOST-HORSE!*

THE NIGHT RIDER DUMPED ME TO KEEP ME SAFE--

--BUT AH CAN'T LET HIM TACKLE THAT MAN-MONSTER ALONE!

OH, NO! THE NIGHT RIDER REINED AROUND-- RIGHT INTO MY LINE OF FIRE!

BULLETS SHOULDN'T HURT HIS GHOSTLY FORM, THOUGH!

*BUT SHOOTING STAR'S STELLAR BULLETS REACT WITH THE NIGHT RIDER'S GHOSTLY FORM AS NOTHING ELSE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO DO.*

*ARRGHH!*

SVAM!

*CAUGHT OFF GUARD, NIGHT RIDER AND BANSHEE SUDDENLY TURN TANGIBLE... AND WHAT THE HULK CAN TOUCH, THE HULK CAN HURT!*

*ONE RANGER, THUS, TAKES OUT ANOTHER.*

THE OTHERS WHO ENTERED THIS FRAY WITH ME HAVE ALL FALLEN-- BUT RED WOLF AND LOBO WILL FIGHT ON TO THE END!

GROWR

INDIAN AND WOLF ATTACK AGAIN? YOU ARE WEAKER THAN ALL THE REST!

PERHAPS, MONSTER, BUT THE WOLF-SPIRIT OWAYODATA FILLS ME WITH HIS POWER!

TO SURRENDER WOULD BE TO BETRAY HIS TRUST!

INDIAN HAS WOLF AND STICK AND POWER OF SOME SPIRIT --

-- BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH AGAINST THE HULK!

*NOTHING* IS EVER ENOUGH AGAINST HULK!

DON'T STOP, YOU RAGING BEHEMOTH! ADVANCE! FILL THESE INTERFERING HEROES WITH THE FEAR OF DEATH ITSELF--

--THAT, PLAYING UPON THEIR FEAR, I CAN TOUCH THEM AND MAKE THEM PAWNS OF THE CORRUPTOR!

YES! HULK WILL SCARE THEM! HULK WILL MAKE THEM KNOW FEAR LIKE THEY HAVE KNOWN BEFORE!

EH? WHO CALLS HULK?

IT'S ME, HULK -- RICK JONES! IT WAS MY MESSAGE THAT LURED THOSE HEROES HERE! I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU TERRORIZE THEM!

MS. ROSS, RICK'S PLACING HIMSELF BETWEEN THE HULK AND THE HEROES!

RICK, COME BACK! KEEP TRYING TO CONTACT THE AVENGERS! LET *THEM* DEAL WITH THE HULK AND THE CORRUPTOR!

YES, BOY-- TRY TO SUMMON THE AVENGERS AGAIN! LET ME ADD THEM TO THE COLLECTION OF SUPER-BEINGS UNDER MY CONTROL!

NO! THIS ALL STARTED WHEN I ASKED THE AVENGERS FOR THEIR HELP IN CURING THE HULK!

THEY SAID THAT IF I COULD FIND THE HULK, THEY'D COME-- AND THEY GAVE ME THE WRIST RADIOS TO CONTACT THEM! ONLY **YOU** STEPPED IN, CORRUPTOR, AND TOOK OVER THE HULK!

YOU WANTED THE AVENGERS TO FIGHT HIM-- TO GET GOOD AND MAD SO THAT YOU COULD TAKE **THEM** OVER WITH YOUR 'EVIL TOUCH', AS WELL!

BUT THESE OTHER HEROES SHOWED UP-- ANSWERED THE CALL YOU FORCED ME TO MAKE!

THEY CAME TO HELP, HULK-- TO HELP ME-- TO HELP **YOU!** TO **HELP,** HULK-- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

TO...HELP... HULK?

THAT'S RIGHT, BIG BUDDY! THERE ARE LOTS OF FOLKS WHO WANT TO HELP YOU--

--AND, IF YOU WANT TO SMASH 'EM ALL, I-- I GUESS YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO START...WITH ME!

DO IT, HULK! SMASH RICK JONES! HE IS OF NO FURTHER USE TO ME!

CORRUPTOR... SAYS... HULK ...SMASH... RICK!

GO AHEAD, HULK! SMASH ME! SMASH ALL YOUR FRIENDS!

THEN YOU'LL HAVE NO ONE BESIDE YOU! NO ONE WHO CARES FOR YOU!

YOU'LL HAVE NO ONE BUT THE CORRUPTOR TELLING YOU WHAT TO DO!

AND THAT WOULDN'T DO AT ALL, WOULD IT, RICK?

BRUCE! YOU DID IT! YOU CHANGED BACK!

IT WAS **YOU** WHO TRIGGERED THE CHANGE, RICK!

YOU REACHED THE HIDDEN CORNER OF THE HULK'S ID THAT KNOWS COMPASSION, MERCY, FRIENDSHIP...

THAT CORNER SUBMERGED EVEN DEEPER BY... THE CORRUPTOR!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED? THE HULK IS GONE, AND IN HIS PLACE STANDS...

A VERY ANGRY ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, CORRUPTOR! I'M A SCIENTIST, MISTER-- A MAN OF NONVIOLENCE! BUT, EVEN WHILE MY CONSCIOUSNESS WAS BURIED DEEP IN THE HULK'S BRAIN, I FELT YOUR VIOLENT POWER, MADDENING AND MANIPULATING MY MIND!

YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR THAT, CORRUPTOR!

NO! I NEED ONLY TOUCH YOU, IN YOUR RAGE, AND YOU SHALL BE--

--MIIIINEE EEEE!

GROWR

THE WOLF LEAPED AT THE CORRUPTOR BEFORE I COULD STRIKE-- AS IF TRYING TO TELL ME THAT ITS MASTER'S COUP STICK SHOULD NEVER BE RAISED IN ANGER... BUT ONLY IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE.

THE CORRUPTOR IS DEFEATED--HIS POWER OVER ME IS BROKEN. JUSTICE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH MINDLESS VIOLENCE!

SOON...

HE WHOSE EVIL DREW THE NIGHT RIDER TO THIS PLANE OF EXISTENCE, IS SUBDUED.

TOGETHER WE THWARTED THE CORRUPTOR'S PLAN UNTIL RICK JONES COULD REASON WITH THE HULK.

BUT THAT IS *ALL* OUR POWERS WERE ABLE TO DO.

AGAINST THE HULK, AH'D SAY THAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH.

DANG RIGHT, STAR! WE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT-- NOT FOR FAME OR FORTUNE-- AN' I WOULDN'T MIND RIDIN' WITH YOU FOLKS AGAIN!

WHAT DO YOU SAY... *RANGERS?*

THE RESPONSE TO TEXAS TWISTER'S QUERY IS THE SUBJECT FOR OTHER, FUTURE TALES.

AND, A SHORT WHILE LATER...

THE HEROES HAVE GONE, TAKING THE CORRUPTOR WITH THEM.

THEY POSSESSED SUPER-POWERS, BUT I JUST WANT TO SAY THAT IT WAS YOU KIDS-- AND RICK-- WHO *REALLY* SAVED THE DAY.

GEE, DR. BANNER, I'M SPEECHLESS.

FOR ONCE!

UH-OH! THERE'S A BUNCHA CARS COMING ACROSS THE DESERT-- AND I RECOGNIZE ONE OF 'EM AS MY DAD'S VAN!

CANDY BARR IS CORRECT...

...AND SOON, BRUCE BANNER FINDS HIMSELF TRYING TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAS HAPPENED-- WITH CERTAIN OMISSIONS-- TO A GROUP OF HIGHLY AGITATED PARENTS.

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND, DRAGGING A GROUP OF TEEN-AGED KIDS ACROSS THE DESERT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?

MR. BARR, I-- UH-- THAT IS...

AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING HALF-DRESSED, ANYWAY?

LISTEN, DAD-- THIS HERE IS DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER! I'LL BET YOU'VE HEARD OF *HIM*?

BANNER? *BRUCE* BANNER?

TH-THE FELLOW WHO BECOMES THE *HULK* WHEN HE >GULP!<--

--GETS ANGRY?

S-SORRY, DR. BANNER! V-VERY SORRY! G-GOOD NIGHT!

AND, AS THE TEEN BRIGADE IS TRUNDLED HOME BY THEIR VERY FRIGHTENED FAMILIES...

DID YOU SEE THE TERROR IN THAT MAN'S EYES WHEN HE REALIZED WHO I WAS, BETTY?

PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS FEARED THE POWER OF THE HULK, BRUCE-- BECAUSE THEY'VE NEVER TRIED TO UNDERSTAND IT.

NO, IF THEY'RE AFRAID OF THE HULK, IT'S BECAUSE HIS RAMPAGES HAVE GIVEN THEM GOOD REASON TO FEAR.

NO MORE! I SWEAR, FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, I WON'T REST UNTIL I'VE FOUND SOME SOLUTION TO THE MENACE OF THE HULK!

RICK AND I WILL STAND BY YOU, BRUCE! WHEREEVER IT TAKES US-- WHATEVER NEEDS BE DONE!

ALL THE WAY, DOC! ALL THE WAY!

ALL THE WAY? EVEN IF IT MEANS AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER WITH...

# THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY?

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# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

IT CAN'T BE! I'M BECOMING THE HULK--

--BUT I'M ALSO CHANGING INTO... CAPTAIN UNIVERSE!

AND I'M FIGHTING MYSELF!

MILGROM

HE HAD BEEN HITCH-HIKING.

HE HAD BEEN RECOGNIZED.

HE HAD FLED.

THEY HAD FOLLOWED.

HE HAD LOST THEM.

BUT NOW HE FINDS HIS WAY BLOCKED.

IT IS MORE THAN HE CAN BEAR.

MORE THAN HE IS WILLING TO BEAR.

ENOUGH!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

# Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

# RARRARGHH

NOTHING STOPS THE HULK!

DANGE
NO TRESPASSIN
UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE
RESTRICTED AREA

BILL MANTLO, WRITER
RICK LEONARDI, PENCILER
MILGROM, WIACEK, STONE, GREEN, GIACOIA INKERS
JIM NOVAK, LETTERS
BOB SHAREN, COLORS
AL MILGROM, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FUGITIVE PHYSICIST BRUCE BANNER IS GONE, HIS INTELLECT SUB-MERGED BENEATH THE SNARLING SAVAGERY OF HIS GAMMA-IRRADIATED ALTER-EGO, **THE INCREDIBLE HULK!**

BUT A SHRED OF BANNER'S MEMORY REMAINS--A SNATCH OF SONG REMEM-BERED AS HE HAD FLED ACROSS THE PRAIRIE.

"AS I WENT WALKING, I SAW A SIGN THERE--

"--AND ON ONE SIDE IT SAID 'NO TRESPASSING'...

"BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE IT DIDN'T SAY NOTHING--

"-- THIS LAND WAS MADE FOR YOU AND ME."

THE LYRICS FADE FROM THE MONSTER'S CONSCIOUSNESS. THEY BELONG TO BANNER, NOT TO HIM.

AT A NEARBY AIR FORCE COMMAND INSTALLATION...

MAJOR BINGHAM! SENSORS ARE SOUNDING A 'YELLOW ALERT'!

INSTRUMENT MALFUNCTION, MASTER SERGEANT?

NO, SIR -- SECURITY'S BEEN BREACHED!

GET ME A SCAN OF THE AREA!

YES, SIR!

THE FIRST SENTINEL RISES FROM BENEATH THE PRAIRIE, OPTISCREENS SCANNING IN THE INFRA-RED.

THE SECOND SENTINEL RISES FROM BENEATH THE PRAIRIE, 'EYES' ON THE ULTRA-VIOLET.

A THIRD SENTINEL RISES FROM BENEATH THE PRAIRIE, 'EARS' ATTUNED TO SONIC WAVES.

TRACKING ON INFRARED, MAJOR! DEFINITE HEAT EMMISSIONS!

TRACKING ON ULTRAVIOLET, MAJOR! WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S ALIVE!

KATHUM KATHUM KATHUM KATHUM

AFFIRMATIVE! ULTRASOUND DETECTS A HEARTBEAT! CAN YOU HEAR IT POUNDING? LIKE THUNDER?!

PROGRAM THE COMPUTER TO RESOLVE AND ENHANCE THE IMAGE! I WANT TO KNOW WHO--OR ***WHAT*** --IS OUT THERE!

THE REQUEST IS KEYED IN. THE DATA IS ANALYZED AND COLLATED.

A COMPOSITE IS ASSEMBLED AND REVEALED AS...

THE ***HULK!*** WHAT IN BLAZES IS THAT MONSTER DOING HERE?!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE: JUST PASSING THROUGH?

ESCALATE TO 'RED ALERT', MASTER SERGEANT! I'M CALLING FOR AN AIR STRIKE!

AIR STRIKE, SIR? AGAINST ONE MAN?

THE HULK'S NO WANDERING SHEEP HERDER OFF HIS RANGE, MISTER!

HE'S THE MIGHTIEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH! THERE ARE FIVE MINUTEMAN *ICBMS* BURIED IN LAUNCHING SILOS SIXTY FEET BELOW THE DESERT OUT THERE! THEY MAY BE BOMB-PROOF -- BUT THEY'RE NOT *HULK-PROOF!*

THIS IS MAJOR BINGHAM! GET ME WING COMMAND!

*INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES -- ARSENAL AND OLD LACE AL.

MOMENTS LATER, A HALF-DOZEN GENERAL DYNAMICS F-16A INTERCEPTORS TAKE TO THE AIR.

EACH INTERCEPTOR IS ARMED WITH A GENERAL ELECTRIC VULCAN MULTI-BARREL MACHINE CANNON CAPABLE OF FIRING UPWARDS OF 6,000 20 MM. SHELLS PER MINUTE.

ORDERS ARE TO KEEP THAT MONSTER FROM THE SILOS, BOYS!

LET'S DO IT!

HE HAD BEEN MINDING HIS OWN BUSINESS, GOING HIS OWN WAY -- NOT BOTHERING ANYBODY.

WHY DO PLANES ATTACK HULK?

WHY?

WHY?!

THE F-16S HAVE STRUCK AT THE HULK DIRECTLY OVER ONE OF OUR HIDDEN SILOS, MAJOR!

I ALREADY TOLD YOU, MASTER SERGEANT, THAT THOSE SILOS CAN WITHSTAND ALL BUT A DIRECT HIT BY AN ATOMIC BOMB!

OUR JETS POSE NO THREAT TO THEM!

ONLY THE POWER OF THE HULK DOES!

PLANES WON'T LEAVE HULK IN PEACE?

HULK WILL FIX PLANES!

REVEALED BENEATH A TORN AWAY TOP LAYER OF SOD, A SILVER SILO COVER SHINES IN THE MOON-LIGHT!

HULK WILL FIX PLANES, GOOD!

FL-FLIGHT LEADER, THAT MONSTER'S HURLING THE *GROUND* UP AT US!

EJECT! EJECT!

SMASH!

EJECT!

TWO INTERCEPTORS DOWN, MAJOR! SHOULD I AUTHORIZE THE USE OF THEIR SIDE-WINDERS?

MAJOR BINGHAM GRIMLY NODS.

WE'VE GOT THE GREEN LIGHT, FLIGHT GROUP!

*FIRE SIDE-WINDERS!*

*THEY ARE HEAT-SEEKING MISSILES, USUALLY USED IN AIR-TO-AIR COMBAT.*

*BUT A WEAPON'S A WEAPON AND, WHEN FACING THE FULL FURY OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK, ONE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE PICKY.*

PLANES SHOOT MISSILES AT HULK? MISSILES CAN'T HURT HULK!

NOTHING CAN HURT HU--!

WHAT'S *HAPPENING*, MASTER SERGEANT? WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING *ON*?

DIRECT HIT ON SILO 7, MAJOR! IT'S CAUSING A MASSIVE SYSTEM'S FAILURE!

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT! AND THE HULK--?

ALL SURFACE SCANNERS WERE KNOCKED OUT BY THE BLAST, SIR.

RAISE BACKUP SCANNERS!

YES, SIR!

*AGAIN SILENT SENTINELS RISE FROM BENEATH THE PRAIRIE TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THEIR DEAFENED AND BLINDED BRETHREN.*

GOOD LORD!

FLIGHT GROUP TO COMMAND BASE! LOOKS LIKE WE SNOOKERED US A MONSTER!

THANK HEAVENS THAT'S OVER!

SIR--?

YES? WHAT IS IT, MISTER?

IT'S THE MINUTEMAN MISSILE IN SILO 7, SIR...

IT'S JUST BEEN ARMED!

SMOKE BILLOWS FROM A GAPING HOLE IN THE EARTH.

WHILE, WITHIN THE CRATER...

I-I SEEM TO REMEMBER BOMBS BURSTING ALL ABOUT ME--SEARING PAIN--AND MY MIND REELING AS IF SOME OUTSIDE FORCE WAS TEARING IT IN TWO!

GOOD LORD! FACING ME, SNARLING SAVAGELY--! IT *CAN'T* BE! IT'S *IMPOSSIBLE!* IT'S ***THE HULK!***

BUT I'M *BRUCE BANNER!* I'M THE MAN WHO BECOMES THE HULK!

HULK DOESN'T KNOW COSTUME, BUT HULK KNOWS YOU!

OTHERS HAVE HURT THE HULK, BUT ONLY ***YOU*** HAVE THE POWER TO SEND HULK AWAY!

HULK WILL ***SMASH*** BANNER!

*IN A LAUNCH SILO BENEATH THEM, A NUCLEAR MISSILE STANDS ARMED AND READY.*

CAPTAIN JAMIE CUSTER SITS IN HIS BOMBPROOF BUNKER SIXTY FEET BELOW THE PRAIRIE.

HIS COMMANDING OFFICER AND SOLE COMPANION IN THE BUNKER LIES DEAD, SLUMPED OVER IN HIS CHAIR WHERE JAIMIE HAD SHOT HIM.

IN HIS HAND, JAMIE CUSTER HOLDS TWO KEYS THAT MAY WELL DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD.

079

HAD TO DO IT. NO OTHER CHOICE.

HEARD BOMBS BURSTING ABOVE. KNEW IT HAD TO BE THE ENEMY, LAUNCHING THE ATTACK I ALWAYS KNEW WOULD COME.

IT'S THE END. THE ENEMY'S LAUNCHED THEIR ATOMIC ARROWS. THEY'RE DESTROYING ALL I KNOW. ALL I LOVE.

I'LL DIE, TOO, BUT I'LL TAKE A FEW OF THE FOE WITH ME, JUST LIKE MY NAMESAKE, GENERAL GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER!

CUSTER

I WON'T DIE WITHOUT LETTING THEM KNOW THEY'VE BEEN IN A BATTLE.

MY C.O. HESITATED. DIDN'T WANT TO TURN HIS KEY TWO SECONDS AFTER I'D TURNED MINE, INITIATING THE LAUNCH PROCEDURE.

HE SAID "WE HAVEN'T RECEIVED THE LAUNCH CODE FROM COMMAND CENTRAL!" I SAID, "OF COURSE NOT. THOSE AUTHORIZED TO GIVE THE ORDER TO LAUNCH MUST HAVE BEEN KILLED INSTANTLY!

AIRLOCK

I SAID, "THERE'S ONLY WE TWO LEFT ALIVE NOW. ONLY WE TWO LEFT TO FIGHT."

I NEVER TRUSTED THE C.O. I KNEW HE'D CRACK IF THE REAL ATTACK EVER CAME. THAT'S WHY I SECRETLY REWIRED THE CONSOLES --

--SO THAT ONE MAN, WITH BOTH LAUNCH KEYS, COULD GET IN A LAST LICK AT THE ENEMY.

COMMAND CENTRAL'S COMPUTERS COULD STILL OVERRIDE, BUT THEIR LIGHTS ARE OUT.

THEY'RE GONE.

I'VE ALREADY ARMED THE MISSILE. THE KEY WILL ACTIVATE THE LAUNCH COUNTDOWN.

GOODBYE, MOM. GOODBYE, DAD. GOODBYE, AMERICA. I'M SORRY I COULDN'T DIE WITH YOU.

LAUNCH CONTROL

BUT YOU WILL BE AVENGED.

WHEEOOO WHEEOOO

YOU RUN THAT ONE BY ME AGAIN, MISTER!

I THINK OUR AIR STRIKE AGAINST THE HULK KNOCKED OUT THE COMMAND LINK BETWEEN US AND SILO 7, SIR!

THE MEN IN THE BUNKER ARE NOW CUT OFF FROM US AND ARE APPARENTLY ACTING ON THEIR OWN.

THEY MUST THINK THE BASE IS UNDER A NUCLEAR ATTACK! THEY'VE ARMED AND READIED THEIR MINUTE-MAN MISSILE FOR LAUNCH! IT'S TARGET, MISTER?

MOSCOW, SIR!

GET ME THE PENTAGON!

NO, GET ME THE PRESIDENT!

ATOP THE DOOMSDAY SILO...

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME? TO US? HOW CAN I, BRUCE BANNER, BE HERE... AND THE HULK BE THERE, WHEN WE'RE ONE AND THE SAME BEING?!

AND THIS COSTUME I'M WEARING! WHERE DID IT COME FROM? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

ANSWERS COME, THEN, TO DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER.

I-I'M NOT JUST *BRUCE BANNER* ANYMORE!

I'M... *CAPTAIN UNIVERSE!* SOMEHOW I KNOW THAT NAME-- KNOW THE AWESOME POWER THAT GOES WITH IT... THE *UNIPOWER!*

"PLANES ATTACKED THE HULK! THEY LAUNCHED MISSILES AT HIM! CHANCES ARE THE HULK WOULD HAVE SURVIVED THEM AS HE SURVIVES EVERYTHING ELSE!

"BUT THE UNIPOWER CHOSE THAT MOMENT TO SPLIT BRUCE BANNER OFF FROM THE HULK--"

--AND TO TRANSFORM ME INTO SOME KIND OF SUPER HERO WITH POWERS FAR BEYOND THE KEN OF MORTAL MEN!

BUT WHY? FOR WHAT PURPOSE WAS THE UNIPOWER GRANTED TO ME? SOMEHOW, I SENSE THAT IT'S A FORCE FOR GOOD--THAT IT'S CHOSEN OTHERS TO BE CAPTAIN UNIVERSE IN THE PAST!*

BUT I SEE NO MENACE FOR THE CHAMPION OF THE UNIPOWER TO CONFRONT, EXCEPT--!

LORD! IS *THAT* IT? HAVE I BEEN GIVEN THE POWER OF CAPTAIN UNIVERSE TO ACCOMPLISH A TASK AT WHICH EVERYONE ELSE HAS FAILED?

*IN MICRONAUTS # 8 & 35, AND MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #9-11 --ARCHIVAL AL.

DOES THE UNIPOWER EXPECT BRUCE BANNER TO END THE THREAT OF THE HULK... FOREVER?

AM I BEING ASKED TO SLAY... MYSELF?

I WON'T *DO* IT!

I WON'T BE MY OWN EXECUTIONER!

THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER WAY!

MY GREEN-SKINNED ALTER-EGO HAS, IT SEEMS, OTHER IDEAS!

HULK WILL SMASH YOU, BANNER! YOU WILL NEVER SEND HULK AWAY AGAIN!

BUT IF YOU SMASH ME, HULK, YOU SMASH US BOTH!

HOW CAN I MAKE YOUR SAVAGE, UNREASONING MIND UNDER-STAND THAT?

HUNH! GROUND OPENS UNDER HULK! IS THIS ANOTHER TRICK OF BANNER'S TO SEND HULK AWAY?

IT'S NOT MY DOING, HULK! IN FACT, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO NOTICE THAT IT'S NOT EARTH YOU'RE STANDING ON--

--BUT SOME KIND OF SHINING SILVER HATCHWAY OPENING UP LIKE THE APERTURE OF A CAMERA LENS!

AND, BELOW...!

BY ALL THAT'S HOLY--! THE HULK AND I HAVE BEEN FIGHTING OVER THE UNDERGROUND SILO OF A MINUTEMAN NUCLEAR MISSILE!

TOR

SO BANNER DID TRY TO TRICK HULK BY KEEPING HULK IN CRATER WHILE PUNY HUMANS GOT READY TO EXPLODE THEIR BOMB!

IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING THE MILITARY *MIGHT* TRY TO DO TO RID THE WORLD OF MY GAMMA-IRRADIATED OTHER HALF! LORD KNOWS, THEY'VE ATTEMPTED EVERY-THING ELSE!

BUT SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK SO! ICBMS ARE MEANT FOR CONTINENT-TO-CONTINENT STRIKES! THE SOVIETS MUST BE ABLE TO MONITOR ANY LAUNCH!

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT ANYONE WOULD BE SO INTENT UPON FINISHING OFF THE HULK AS TO RUN THE RISK OF STARTING A TOTAL NUCLEAR WAR!

NO, THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE GOING ON AROUND HERE--AND I'VE GOT TO FIGHT PAST THE HAMMERING HANDS OF THE HULK TO FIND OUT WHAT!

THE UNIPOWER FLOWS THROUGH CAPTAIN UNIVERSE'S FINGERTIPS.

BRUCE BANNER STRIKES OUT AGAINST... HIMSELF.

AARRGHH! BANNER IS MIGHTY! BANNER CAN HURT HULK! BUT BANNER WILL NEVER SEND HULK AWAY AGAIN!

AND STILL, NEITHER OF THEM UNDERSTANDS THAT THE ENEMY IS NOT THEMSELVES.

HUNH! BANNER KNOWS HE CANNOT BEAT HULK HIMSELF, SO BANNER HAS CALLED SOLDIERS!

WHAT?

HELICOPTERS--DISGORGING A COMMANDO UNIT! SURELY THEY KNOW BY NOW THAT CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY CAN'T HURT THE HULK--!

EH? THEY'RE NOT PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO THE HULK OR ME! THEY'RE RACING RIGHT PAST US --

-- TOWARDS THE SILO!

ALL UNITS-- DESCEND!

BRUCE BANNER IS A FAMOUS SCIENTIST, A BRILLIANT THINKER. HE DOES NOT NEED THE UNIVISION TO AT LAST SHED LIGHT ON THE SITUATION.

THE HULK ISN'T THE MENACE I'VE BEEN GIVEN THE UNIPOWER TO COMBAT!

THE *MISSILE* IS!

IT MUST HAVE BECOME ARMED ACCIDENTALLY--PERHAPS DURING THE ATTACK ON THE HULK! THOSE COMMANDOS ARE RACING TO THE COMMAND BUNKER TO DEFUSE IT! IF THEY FAIL--IF IT IS LAUNCHED --IF ITS NUCLEAR PAYLOAD STRIKES ITS TARGET-- UNDOUBTEDLY IN THE SOVIET UNION...

...THE ENTIRE WORLD WOULD BE ENGULFED IN ATOMIC WAR!

THE HULK COULD CARE LESS! ALL HE KNOWS IS THAT THE SOLDIERS ARE IGNORING HIM, LEAVING HIM TO CONCENTRATE ON ATTACKING ME!

BUT I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE--!

KAVAM

NEVER... KNEW... WHAT IT WAS... LIKE--

--TO BE ON THE... RECEIVING END... OF ONE OF THE HULK'S PUNCHES!

I MANAGED TO SAVE MYSELF BY VAPORIZING THE 'COPTER! HUH--! LISTEN TO ME!

WHAT'S THE EXTENT OF THE POWER THAT BRUCE BANNER HAS BEEN GIVEN? DOES IT HAVE *ANY* LIMITS?

THE ANSWER TO THAT WILL COME, WHEN CAPTAIN UNIVERSE--

-- HURLS HIMSELF FULL UPON THE MIGHTIEST MORTAL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!

I'VE GOT TO SUBDUE THE HULK SO THAT I CAN DEAL WITH THE MISSILE!

COME, PUNY BANNER! NOT ALL YOUR POWER WILL SAVE YOU FROM THE HULK!

IN THE BUNKER...

SOUNDS OF COMBAT ABOVE THE SILO.

CONTINUAL BOMBARDMENT? OF COURSE! THE ENEMY'S STILL HAMMERING US!

CUSTER

SILO DOOR

AND, IN THE SILO...

SILO'S BEEN OPENED!

USAF

THE MANIACS INSIDE MUST BE PREPARING FOR A LAUNCH.

WE'VE GOT TO BREAK THROUGH SIX FEET OF SOLID TITANIUM TO REACH THE BUNKER-- BEFORE WE'RE CRISPY FRIED IN THE BACK-WASH OF THE MISSILE'S LAUNCH BOOSTERS!

HEAVEN HELP US!

HEAVEN DOES!

THE INCENDIARY CHARGE AFFIXED TO THE TITANIUM DOOR BURNS THROUGH THE LOCK MECHANISM. THE COMMANDOES ARE IN.

CAREFUL! THEY'RE ARMED!

THERE'S NO *TIME* TO BE CAREFUL!

AHEAD...

FIRST KEY INITIATES LAUNCHING PROCEDURE. T-MINUS 60 SECONDS.

CUSTER

LAUNCH

BEHIND...

THE ROCKETS ARE FIRING! THE COUNTDOWN'S BEGUN!

SHUT THE HATCH, MAN, BEFORE WE'RE BURNED WITH THE REST OF OUR UNIT!

YEEAGGHH!

KEEP MOVING! DON'T LOOK BACK!

ABOVE...

SMOKE RISING FROM THE SILO! THE MISSILE'S BEGINNING TO LAUNCH!

THIS IS TIME FOR FIGHTING, BANNER -- NOT FOR THINKING!

THAT IS WHY HULK IS BETTER THAN BANNER! THAT IS WHY HULK WILL WIN!

SPAK!

HULK KNOWS NOT TO THINK WHEN FIGHTING!

OF COURSE, BECAUSE THE *RATIONAL* ASPECT OF THE HULK'S PERSONA BELONGS TO ME--

--BRUCE BANNER!

SOMEHOW, WHEN BOTH ASPECTS OF THE HULK AND BRUCE BANNER ARE MERGED, BANNER MUST EXERT SOME SUBTLE, LOGICAL INFLUENCE UPON THE HULK!

SEPARATED AS WE ARE NOW, I EMBODY BANNER'S INTELLECT --WHILE THE HULK REPRESENTS THE SHEER SAVAGERY OF THE MONSTER!

I FEEL LIKE DR. JEKYLL COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH MR. HYDE!

STILL THINKING, BANNER?

YES, HULK! DESPITE YOUR CONTEMPT FOR LOGIC AND INTELLECT-- MY ABILITY TO REASON IS WHAT WILL ENABLE ME TO INTELLIGENTLY USE THE UNI-POWER TO SUBDUE YOU, SO THAT I CAN STOP THE MISSLE FROM BEING LAUNCHED!

DO YOU HEAR ME, HULK? I SAID "*SUBDUE*", NOT "*DESTROY*"!

I CAN EVEN USE THE UNI-POWER TO BLAST YOU WITH A STEADY CONCENTRATION OF GAMMA RAYS--THE VERY FORM OF RADIATION THAT CREATED YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE!

MAYBE IN THAT WAY I CAN CURE YOU, REVERTING YOU BACK TO...!

NOTHING IS HAPPENING, BANNER! DO *YOU* HEAR? *NOTHING!*

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! OF COURSE THE HULK ISN'T REVERTING TO HUMAN AGAIN!

THERE IS *NO* BRUCE BANNER PERSONA FOR HIM TO REVERT TO! *I'M* BANNER--AND BANNER IS CAPTAIN UNIVERSE NOW!

*AT BASE COMMAND...*

NO, MR. PRESIDENT, IT'S NOT THE HULK WHO'S THE PROBLEM!

SOME SORT OF...SUPER HERO ...IS KEEPING *HIM* BUSY!

IT'S THE MEN INSIDE THE SILO WHO'VE ACTIVATED THE MISSILE!

ARE WE DEALING WITH LUNATICS, MAJOR? HAVE THOSE MEN GONE OUT OF THEIR MINDS?

I DON'T KNOW, MR. PRESIDENT! THEY REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR CALLS! A COMMANDO UNIT'S GONE IN AFTER THEM, SIR!

THEN LET'S PRAY THEY REACH THEM IN TIME, MAJOR!

THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MUCH ELSE WE CAN *DO* AT THE MOMENT... *EXCEPT* PRAY!

PRAY ALSO, AMERICA, THAT THE ONE MAN ON THE SCENE WITH THE POWER AND ABILITY TO STOP THE MISSILE'S LAUNCH ISN'T FIRST DESTROYED BY A MONSTER OF HIS OWN MAKING!

HULK ALWAYS THOUGHT BANNER WAS JUST ANOTHER PUNY HUMAN! HULK NEVER KNEW BANNER WAS SO POWERFUL! BUT ALL BANNER'S POWER MEANS NOTHING!

HULK IS STILL STRONGER THAN BANNER! *HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!*

THE HULK IS CRUSHING ME IN A GRIP SO RELENTLESS, SO REMORSELESS, THAT I CAN'T HELP BUT UNDERSTAND--

--WHY THE REST OF MANKIND FEARS AND TRIES TO DESTROY ME WHENEVER I BECOME MY GREEN-SKINNED OTHER SELF!

HULK,..IF YOU... KILL ME... IT WILL MEAN THE... END OF US... BOTH!

MORE *TALK*, BANNER? MORE *LIES* TO TRY AND CONFUSE HULK?

BANNER IS CRAZY!

LOOK INTO HULK'S EYES, BANNER! *LOOK!*

IT'S *NOT* A LIE, HULK! IT'S THE TRUTH!

I'M YOU-- AND YOU'RE ME!

DOES BANNER SEE ANY TRACE OF HIMSELF IN HULK'S EYES?

NO, BECAUSE HULK IS HULK!

HULK IS HULK!

YOU'RE WRONG, HULK-- SO VERY WRONG-- BUT THERE'S NO TIME TO EDUCATE YOU!

ARRGHH!

THERE'S ONLY TIME TO USE THE *UNIVISION* TO MAKE YOU LET ME GO!

HE'S DAZED--BLINDED BY THE BURST OF BRILLIANCE FROM THE UNIVISION! HE'S LET ME GO!

RIBS FEEL LIKE THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH A GRANITE CRUSHER, BUT THE MIRACLE OF IT IS, THAT I WAS IN THE HULK'S GRIP--

--AND I SURVIVED!

SIXTY FEET BELOW THE PRAIRIE...

IT'S TIME TO TURN THE SECOND KEY-- TO LAUNCH THE MISSILE!

CUSTER

EH? THE SMELL OF MELTING METAL--!

SSSSHHH

FRAKOOM

GET AWAY FROM THAT CONSOLE, SOLDIER!

NOW!

BUT JAMIE CUSTER IS TOO FAR GONE TO RECOGNIZE THE ARRIVAL OF THE COMMANDO UNIT AS AN **END** TO HIS APOCALYPTIC FANTASIES--AND A RETURN TO REALITY.

THE **ENEMY!** THEY'RE HERE, GENERAL!

THEY'VE SURROUNDED ME JUST AS THEY SURROUNDED YOU!

THEY MAY KILL ME, GENERAL--

CUSTER? HAVE YOU GONE MAD?

--BUT THEY WON'T STOP ME!

CUSTER!

THEN THERE IS NO MORE TIME FOR ANYTHING BUT...DEATH!

GKKKK...

I'M HURT, GENERAL! HURT BAD! HELP ME?

DO WHAT YOU **HAVE** TO DO, SON!

TH-THANKS, GENERAL. I WILL.

KLIK

KRAR

"AND THE ROCKETS' RED GLARE THE BOMBS BURSTING IN AIR--"

SKY IS LIT UP! NIGHT HAS BECOME DAY AROUND HULK!

IT'S THE MISSILE, HULK!

THE MISSILE'S BEEN LAUNCHED!

IF IT STRIKES ITS TARGET--NO, IF IT EVEN ENTERS SOVIET AIR-SPACE--THE OTHER SIDE WILL UNLEASH THEIR MISSILES IN A DEADLY SWARM OF DESTRUCTION!

THE WORLD AS I KNOW IT WILL CEASE TO EXIST!

INSTEAD OF SUBDUING YOU, HULK, I ALLOWED YOU TO DELAY ME! THE VERY THING I HOPED TO PREVENT HAS TAKEN PLACE! A NUCLEAR WARHEAD'S BEEN LAUNCHED TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION!

YOU'RE NOT IMPORTANT ANYMORE, HULK! THE MISSILE IS--*AND I'M GOING TO STOP IT!*

BANNER RUNS AWAY FROM HULK?

HULK DID NOT START THIS FIGHT! PLANES AND BANNER DID! BUT HULK KNOWS THAT, AS LONG AS BANNER LIVES, HE WILL STILL HAVE POWER TO MAKE HULK GO AWAY!

HULK DOES NOT WANT TO GO AWAY--***EVER***--SO HULK MUST FOLLOW BANNER AND SMASH BANNER!

NO, HULK DID NOT START THIS FIGHT--BUT HULK WILL ***END*** IT--AS ONLY THE HULK CAN!

*THE MIGHTIEST LEG MUSCLES OF ANY BEING EVER BORN, HURL THE HULK UP, UP, **UP!***

INCREDIBLE! EVEN I NEVER REALIZED HOW INCALCULABLY AWESOME THE HULK'S POWER IS!

HE LEAPED AFTER THE MISSILE --AND HE'S GAINING!

BANNER WANTS TO STOP MISSILE?

HULK WANTS TO STOP BANNER!

HULK WILL NOT LET BANNER DO WHAT BANNER WANTS!

BUT YOU MUST, HULK, OR THE EARTH IS DOOMED!

HULK DOESN'T CARE ABOUT EARTH! IF EARTH DIES, BANNER DIES!

AND YOU'D DIE, TOO, HULK-- OR DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR SHEER SAVAGE POWER WILL MAKE YOU IMMUNE?

NOTHING CAN KILL HULK! HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

WHY AM I TRYING TO REASON WITH THE HULK WHEN ALL HIS REASONING POWER RESIDES IN ME?

I CAN'T LET HIM DISTRACT ME-- NOT NOW, WHEN THERE'S A CHANCE THAT I CAN USE THE UNIPOWER TO DEFUSE THE MISSILE'S NUCLEAR WARHEAD!

NO!

HULK, BY ALL THAT'S HOLY-- LET ME GO!

NO USE-- HE WON'T LISTEN! AND NOW WE'RE PASSING OUT OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, AND SOUND DOESN'T TRAVEL IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE! THE HULK CAN RESIST THESE CONDITIONS FOR A TIME-- BUT CAN I?

THE HULK'S THROWN ME FROM THE MISSILE!

MARVELING THAT HE CAN SURVIVE THE RIGORS OF SPACE, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE SOARS AFTER THE RUNAWAY MISSILE AS IT BENDS ABOUT THE ORBIT OF THE EARTH.

I'VE GOT TO CATCH UP TO IT! I MUST!

STANDING ASTRIDE THE DEADLY ROCKET LIKE A DEFIANT COLOSSUS, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE'S MONSTROUS ALTER-EGO AWAITS HIS RETURN.

IF I DON'T STOP THIS MISSILE, BILLIONS OF PEOPLE WILL DIE!

EVEN IF THE HULK COULD HEAR ME, WOULD HE CARE?

TO HIM, THOSE COUNTLESS LIVES MEAN NOTHING! TO HIM, THEY'RE ONLY 'PUNY HUMANS'!

MAYBE IF I SHOCK HIM--

-- SHOW HIM MY FACE... *HIS* FACE--

-- MAYBE HE'LL REALIZE THAT HE-- ***WE***--ARE PART OF THAT GREAT HUMAN FAMILY, AND THAT... IF THEY DIE... WE DIE!

***UNNGH!*** NO USE! HE HASN'T MADE THE CONNECTION! HE STILL HATES BANNER!

ON EARTH...

THE MISSILE HAS ELUDED ALL ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY IT. IT HAS GONE BEYOND ALL 'FAIL SAFE' POINTS.

I AM SORRY, CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV, BUT THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO.

WE WILL ATTEMPT TO DESTROY YOUR MISSILE OURSELVES, MR. PRESIDENT. IF WE FAIL, I FEAR A COUNTERSTRIKE IS UNAVOIDABLE.

I, TOO, AM SORRY... BUT I THINK YOU WOULD DO THE SAME IN MY PLACE.

I... DON'T KNOW.

THE MISSILE'S CURVING DOWN--BACK INTO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE-- TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION... AND THE HULK'S RIDING IT LIKE A BUCKING BRONCO!

THERE'S NO TIME LEFT FOR A DELICATE DEFUSING OPERATION! THE HULK WON'T LET ME GET CLOSE TO THE MISSILE LONG ENOUGH TO TRY!

I CAN NO LONGER WORRY ABOUT HIM... OR ME!

THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO DO EXCEPT DESTROY THE MISSILE HERE--ON THE EDGE OF SPACE!

PERHAPS THIS IS HOW IT WAS MEANT TO END ALL ALONG...

--WITH BRUCE BANNER USING THE POWER OF CAPTAIN UNIVERSE TO DESTROY THE MENACE OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK... FOREVER!

WITHOUT FURTHER HESITATION, THE METAMORPHOSED PHYSICIST USES THE UNIPOWER TO ACTIVATE THE WARHEAD.

A NEW STAR LIGHTS THE HEAVENS, ONE FRIGHTENINGLY NEAR TO EARTH.

IN THE VERY HEART OF THE EXPLODING 'STAR'...

WE'RE STILL ALIVE! THE UNIPOWER IS PROTECTING BOTH THE HULK AND ME!

WE'RE MERGING BACK INTO ONE BEING!

BUT WHY DIDN'T THE UNIPOWER JUST LET US DIE--ENDING OUR MENACE TO HUMANITY ONCE AND FOR ALL?

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! THAT WAS NEVER THE UNI-POWER'S PURPOSE! WHEN IT TOUCHED ME--US-- IT INTENDED TO UNITE BOTH THE HULK'S SAVAGE POWER WITH BRUCE BANNER'S INTELLECT IN ONE BEING--

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE!

TOGETHER, WE SHOULD HAVE HAD BOTH THE POWER AND THE INTELLIGENCE TO PREVENT THE LAUNCHING OF THE MISSILE!

INSTEAD, THE HULK AND I FOUGHT-- AND THE MISSILE WAS LAUNCHED! NOW IT'S EXPLODED HERE IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE, AND ITS DEADLY RADIATION WILL FALL LIKE A KILLING RAIN UPON A DEFENSELESS EARTH!

I'VE GOT TO STOP IT WHILE I STILL POSSESS THE UNIPOWER! I'VE GOT TO USE THAT INTELLECT FOR WHICH I'M FAMOUS!

BRUCE BANNER REACHES OUT WITH HIS MIND AND WITH THE UNIPOWER STILL HIS TO COMMAND.

INDIVIDUAL ATOMS OF THE ATOMIC CLOUD ARE MADE VISIBLE TO HIM BY THE UNIVISION.

MANIPULATING THESE ATOMS WITH THE UNIPOWER, BRUCE BANNER CAUSES THEIR PROTONS TO FLEE FROM THEIR NUCLEI AND TO DISAPPEAR INTO SPACE.

I'VE DONE IT! I'VE CHANGED THE RADIOACTIVE ATOMS RELEASED BY THE EXPLOSION TO HARMLESS ATOMS OF LEAD--

--BY MOVING THEM DOWN ON THE ATOMIC SCALE!

THE EARTH IS SAFE! SAFE!

... SAFE, MR. PRESIDENT! I DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU DESTROYED YOUR MISSILE, OR HOW YOU NEUTRALIZED THE RADIO-ACTIVE CLOUD -- BUT THE DANGER IS OVER!

IT IS A MIRACLE!

BOYS, SOMEBODY UP THERE MUST LIKE THIS LITTLE PLANET OF OURS AN AWFUL LOT!

CUSTER?

YES, SIR.

LORD DELIVER US FROM MADMEN!

SOMEWHERE AT SEA...

I'M ALIVE -- AND SO IS THE EARTH! IT WAS THE UNIPOWER THAT DID IT! FOR ONE BRIEF, SHINING MOMENT IT LET ME KNOW WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO BE A GOD --

...AND TO USE A GOD'S POWER ***WISELY***, IN THE SERVICE OF MAN!

THE DANGER'S PAST! THE UNI-POWER'S GONE, NOW!

LEAVING ME, ONCE AGAIN, A MAN CURSED BY FATE TO BECOME...

...THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

THE END

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KING-SIZE ANNUAL!

ALL NEW!

# THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

## The DAY The EARTH TURNED GREEN!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!®

# AIIIEEEEEEE!

WHY IS THIS MAN SCREAMING?

PERHAPS BECAUSE RESTRAINING STRAPS HOLD HIM FAST? NO, FOR HE PLACED HIMSELF IN THIS POSITION.

PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE IMAGES WHICH FLASH RELENTLESSLY ON THE MULTIPLE SCREENS BEFORE HIM? NO, FOR HE ACTIVATED THOSE IMAGES HIMSELF.

PERHAPS BECAUSE HE IS AFRAID? WELL, YES, BUT ACTUALLY BECAUSE HE IS NOT AFRAID ENOUGH!

YOU SEE, THE GENTLEMAN SEATED BEFORE YOU IS **DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER** AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS PERIOD OF HIS LIFE, HE IS **TRYING** TO TRANSFORM HIMSELF INTO **THE INCREDIBLE HULK!**

BILL MANTLO, SCRIPT
RICH BUCKLER, PENCILS
JOE SINNOTT, INKS
JIM NOVAK, LETTERS
BOB SHAREN, COLORS
AL MILGROM, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, LEADER

NOTE: THIS ADVENTURE TAKES PLACE **BEFORE** THE HULK AQUIRED BRUCE BANNER'S INTELLECT AS SEEN IN THE CURRENT ISSUE OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

## THE DAY THE EARTH TURNED GREEN!

ONE AFTER THE OTHER, IN UNENDING, RAPID SUCCESSION--A SERIES OF IMAGES--PICTURES OF NEW YORK CITY-- FLASH ON THE VIEWSCREENS AT WHICH BRUCE BANNER HAS FORCED HIMSELF TO STARE.

PARK AVENUE! THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING! THE WORLD TRADE CENTER!

MORE! *MORE!* THE *HULK* MUST UNDERSTAND! I MUST *MAKE* HIM UNDERSTAND!

*WATER*-- THAT'S THE KEY! WATER UNDER BRIDGES! WATER IN WATER-TUNNELS! WATER FROM FOUNTAINS!

THINK *WATER*, BANNER! THINK IT SO HARD IT SINKS DEEP INTO YOUR *BRAIN*!

SUDDENLY, THE SOLE DOOR TO THE CHAMBER HISSES OPEN.

I-I THOUGHT I'D JAMMED THE MECHANISM--!

I HAD AN *OVERRIDE KEY*! OH, BRUCE-- WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME ARE YOU *DOING* TO YOURSELF?!

BEHIND THE WOMAN CROWD STRANGE, SILENT FIGURES.

I'M TRYING TO SAVE THE *WORLD*, RIKKY--TO SAVE IT FROM *HIM!*

BRUCE, YOU'RE DELIRIOUS FROM THE *GAMMA TREATMENTS!*

YOU KNOW THAT *HE* IS TRYING TO CURE YOU!

YOU'RE WRONG, RIKKY-- *WRONG!* I KNOW NOW WHAT *HE* IS AFTER AND, HEAVEN HELP ME, I'VE *HELPED* HIM ATTAIN IT!

BUT I'LL *STOP* HIM! I'VE JUST GOT TO MAKE MYSELF *MAD--SCARED!*

BRUCE, I'M GOING TO ADMINISTER A *SEDATIVE--!*

TOO LATE FOR THAT NOW, RIKKY.

I CAN FEEL THE CHANGE STARTING.

NO MISTAKE. I'VE GONE THROUGH IT TOO OFTEN--

--NOT TO KNOW THE *SIGNS!*

POUNDING PULSE! HEART THUNDERING IN MY BREAST!

I'M *CHANGING*, RIKKY! *CHANGING!*

*THERE IS NO MORE BRUCE BANNER!*

*THERE IS ONLY... THE HULK!*

*NOW THE SILENT SHAPES MOVE IN.*

THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE THEY-- OR ANYONE-- CAN DO AGAINST THE RAGING GREEN BEHEMOTH WHO NOW STANDS IN THE PLACE OF THE SCARED SCIENTIST.

WHERE IS HULK? WHO HAS BROUGHT HULK HERE?

SPEAK-- OR HULK WILL *SMASH!*

BRUCE BANNER BROUGHT YOU HERE, HULK-- TO *HELP* YOU! TO *CURE* YOU!

BANNER? HULK *HATES* BANNER!

HULK IS LEAVING--!

REALIZING THAT SHE HAS SUCCEEDED ONLY IN FURTHER ANGERING THE HULK, THE WOMAN MAKES A DESPERATE DECISION.

*RESTRAIN* THE HULK-- UNTIL *HE* GETS HERE!

*RAARRHHH!* WOMAN ORDERS FUNNY MEN TO HOLD HULK? *NOBODY* HOLDS HULK!

HULK WILL SMASH FUNNY MEN!

HE TRIES, BUT THE 'FUNNY MEN' ARE STRANGELY RESILIENT.

NO MATTER HOW HARD HE HURLS THEM AWAY, LIKE RUBBER BALLS THEY KEEP BOUNCING BACK.

AND, NO MATTER HOW HARD THE HULK SMASHES THEM, THEY ABSORB HIS BLOWS--LIKE SPONGES --AND SPRING BACK UPON HIM FOR MORE.

WHY CAN'T HULK *HURT* FUNNY MEN! *WHY?!*

BECAUSE, YOU BRAINLESS BEHEMOTH, THEY WERE CREATED EXPRESSLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF RENDERING YOUR AWESOME STRENGTH... MEANINGLESS!

IT'S *HIM!* *HE* IS HERE!

INDEED, DR. KEEGAN... THE *LEADER* HAS ARRIVED!

MOST OPPORTUNELY, I PERCEIVE.

CEASE AND DESIST, HULK. YOUR *RAGE* IS DESTROYING PRICELESS EQUIPMENT.

YOU TRY TO *COMMAND* HULK? HULK KNOWS YOU! YOU ARE *LEADER!*

YOU ARE *ENEMY!*

HULK SMASHES ENEMIES!

HOWEVER, BEFORE THE GREEN-SKINNED GOLIATH CAN RAISE A GARGANTUAN FIST TO STRIKE...

PICTURES! PICTURES INSIDE HULK'S HEAD!

HOW DID PICTURES GET THERE? WHAT DO PICTURES *MEAN??*

HULK DOESN'T KNOW!!

ALL HULK KNOWS IS THAT HULK MUST GET TO PLACE HE SEES IN *PICTURES*--

--AND HULK MUSTN'T LET *ANYONE* STOP HIM!!

HULK, NO! YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE WE ARE--!

HE WILL DISCOVER THAT INFORMATION FOR HIMSELF, DR. KEEGAN--

KA-ASH!

--WHEN HE FALLS THE MANY MILES BETWEEN THE EARTH AND *OMNIVAC!*

HUNH?! HULK IS *OUTSIDE!* HULK *FALLS!*

*THE AIR RUSHING UP TO MEET THE HULK DROWNS OUT THE LEADER'S LAST WHISPERED WORDS.*

FAREWELL, HULK. YOU AND YOUR *ALTER-EGO* HAVE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE!

THANKS TO YOU BOTH, I *SHALL SOON RULE THE WORLD!*

DR. RIKKY KEEGAN HAS NOT HEARD THE LEADER'S PARTING WORDS TO THE FALLING HULK EITHER.

WE MUST *DO* SOMETHING--!

THE HULK HAS SURVIVED FALLS FROM GREATER HEIGHTS, MY DEAR.

I TRUST THAT HE WILL *SURVIVE* THIS ONE, AS WELL.

BUT THE *CURE*--?! WHAT OF OUR PLANS TO PREVENT *BRUCE BANNER* FROM BECOMING THE *HULK* FOREVER ?!

WE HAVE DONE OUR BEST, MY DEAR DOCTOR--

--BUT BANNER WAS EVER *UNSTABLE*. WE KNEW THAT FROM THE START-- KNEW THAT, SHOULD HIS PARANOID DELUSIONS ABOUT *MY* BEING HIS *ENEMY* SEIZE HOLD OF HIM--

--THAT WE COULD NEVER HOPE TO RESTRAIN HIM!

HOWEVER, ALL IS NOT LOST. WE HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ABOUT *GAMMA RADIATION* BY STUDYING THE HULK.

SOMEDAY SOON WE MAY PUT WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED TO USE.

TO *CURE* BRUCE BANNER?

HMM. YES, THAT TOO. WILL YOU JOIN ME IN A TOAST, DOCTOR?

TO WHAT, LEADER?

TO THE *FUTURE*, MY DEAR--

--OUR FUTURE!

THIS IS... *WATER*?!

YES, IT IS. *DRINK UP!*

SOME DAYS LATER...

DON RATNER FOR THE E.B.S. EVENING NEWS: THE *EPIDEMIC* RAVAGING NEW YORK CITY CONTINUES UNABATED TONIGHT.

EVERYWHERE IN MANHATTAN, WITHOUT WARNING, PEOPLE ARE TURNING *GREEN*.

THIS DISCOLORATION IS ACCOMPANIED BY FEVER, NAUSEA... AND, FINALLY, CAUSES *COMA*.

THIS UNEXPLAINED DISEASE IS STRIKING EVERYONE. AS YET, THERE IS NO KNOWN *CURE*.

I-I FEEL A LITTLE GREEN MYSELF...

THE GREEN FLU STRIKES AT THE MIGHTY AS WELL AS THE MERELY MORTAL.

WITNESS, IN THE WORLD-FAMOUS BAXTER BUILDING...

I-I HAD TO CUT MY PATROL SHORT, REED! T-TOO SICK TO GO ON!

I-I KNOW, JOHNNY-- THE GREEN FLU HAS AFFECTED US ALL!

OUR SON FRANKLIN IS BURNING WITH FEVER, REED.

KEEP GIVING HIM WATER, SUE.

HUH? WHO? THE MAYOR?

MAYO NEW CITY

YES, MR. GRIMM, I'M CALLING TO SOLICIT THE SCIENTIFIC GENIUS OF REED RICHARDS TO FIND A CURE FOR THIS GREEN FLU THAT IS DEVASTATING NEW YORK CITY.

REED AIN'T IN ANY SHAPE TA HELP ANYBODY, MR. MAYOR! WE ALL GOT THE BLASTED PISTACHIO PLAGUE HERE, TOO.

T-TELL HIM THAT I SENT ALL MY RESEARCH NOTES OVER TO CITY HOSPITAL BEFORE I WAS STRICKEN, BEN.

DIDJA GET THAT, ED? I'M AFRAID THAT'S ALL THE HELP THE BIG APPLE CAN EXPECT OUTTA THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

AT CITY HOSPITAL...

MORE COTS! PUT BLANKETS DOWN ON THE FLOOR!

WITHIN, IT SEEMS AS IF AN ENTIRE CITY HAS SUCCUMBED TO THE ENIGMATIC EPIDEMIC AT ONCE.

EMERGE

WAITING ROOM

A CALL FOR HELP HAS ELICITED THE AID OF...

DR. STEPHEN STRANGE!

YOU ARE DR. DONALD BLAKE? MY SERVANT, WONG, SAID YOU HAD CALLED. I CAME AS SOON AS I COULD.

BUT I TRUST THAT YOU ARE AWARE THAT MY MINISTRATIONS ARE NO LONGER ... MEDICAL.

I AM AWARE OF THAT, DOCTOR...

--BUT FINDING A *CURE* FOR THE GREEN FLU MAY REQUIRE SOMEWHAT, ER, *UNUSUAL* MEASURES.

WHILE DON BLAKE KNOWS THAT STEPHEN STRANGE IS **DR. STRANGE, MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS**, THE LATTER IS UNAWARE THAT THE LAME SURGEON IS ALSO **THE MIGHTY THOR.**

YOU SUSPECT THAT THIS EPIDEMIC MAY BE OF *UNNATURAL* ORIGINS?

I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* TO SUSPECT-- BUT THE BEST MEDICAL MINDS IN NEW YORK ARE STUMPED!

AT THIS POINT, WE'LL TRY ANYTHING!

VERY WELL. I WILL HELP IN ANY WAY I CAN.

GOOD! WOULD YOU CARE TO WASH UP FIRST?

HMMM. THUNDER. SOUNDS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR *RAIN.*

AS THE TWO HEALERS GET TO WORK...

...ANOTHER SEEKS A CURE TO THE GREEN FLU IN SCIENTIFIC SOLITUDE...

IN THE BIOPHYSICS LABORATORY AT EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY, GRADUATE STUDENT **PETER PARKER** WORKS THROUGH THE NIGHT, PORING OVER BLOOD SAMPLES TAKEN FROM FLU VICTIMS.

I'VE RESERVED TIME ON THE SCHOOL'S MOST POWERFUL *SCANNING ELECTRON MICROSCOPE* TO TRY AND FIND SOME CLUE TO THE CAUSE OF THE *GREEN FLU.*

SO FAR, ALL I'VE GOTTEN IS EYE-STRAIN! WAIT! WHAT'S THIS?

HOLY COW! SOMETHING'S BOUND ITSELF TO THESE OTHERWISE NORMAL BLOOD-CELLS-- SOMETHING *GREEN!*

RADIOMETERS ARE PICKING UP STRONG INDICATIONS OF *GAMMA RAYS!*

GOTTA CHECK IT OUT-- BUT SO DIZZY, SO HOT!

NEED A DRINK OF WATER, AND THEN I'LL CONTINUE MY RESEARCH...

BUT THE COOL WATER SLAKING THE FEVERISH GRADUATE STUDENT'S PARCHED THROAT ONLY MAKES HIM FEEL WORSE.

M-MUST BE WORKING TOO HARD...

GOTTA REST...

HOWEVER, THIS NIGHT THERE WILL BE NO REST FOR THE WEARY.

HELP!

SAVE US!!

WHAT THE--?!

MY FELLOW-STUDENTS, FLEEING IN *FEAR!* BUT, FROM WHAT??

HE'S *GREEN*-- GREEN ALL OVER!

M-MAYBE HE'S CARRYING THE *GREEN FLU!?*

MAYBE HE'S *CAUSING* IT!?!

RUN!!

YES! RUN! *RUN FROM HULK!*

ISU

WHY HAS HULK COME HERE, WHERE PUNY HUMANS LIVE?

SOMETHING *MADE* HULK COME! IF ONLY HULK COULD REMEMBER...

SOMETHING ABOUT... *WATER!!*

*MEANWHILE, IN THE BIOCHEM LAB, SCIENCE STUDENT BECOMES SUPER HERO!*

THE *HULK*-- HERE IN NEW YORK?! THAT MONSTER'S A CREATION OF *GAMMA RAYS!*

COULD *HE* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE *GAMMA GENE* I'VE DISCOVERED BINDING ITSELF TO OTHERWISE NORMAL BLOOD CELLS? COULD HE BE THE REASON EVERYONE'S TURNING *GREEN?*

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT!

YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD *SPIDER-MAN* HAS GOTTA ASK THE *HULK* FOR A *BLOOD SAMPLE!*

AND SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK OL' JADE-JAWS IS GONNA GIVE IT *WILLINGLY!*

UH, HI, HULK! CARE TO DONATE SOME OF THAT BRIGHT GREEN *BLOOD* OF YOURS FOR A WORTHY CAUSE?

*AARGH!* HULK KNOWS BUG-EYES! HULK AND BUG-EYES HAVE FOUGHT WITH EACH OTHER AND AGAINST EACH OTHER IN PAST!

WHICH IS BUG-EYES NOW? *HULK'S FRIEND--* *OR HULK'S FOE?!?*

I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT WE WERE BEST BUDDIES, GREENSKIN -- AT LEAST 'TIL I GET THE *BLOOD SAMPLE* I NEED!

*BUG-EYES WANTS HULK'S BLOOD?!?*

THEN THAT MAKES BUG-EYES HULK'S *ENEMY!*

NO, HULK! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND--! *UNGHH!*

*SPIDER-SENSE* SHOULD HAVE ENABLED ME TO AVOID THAT BLOW--

--BUT SO SICK-- SO FEVERISH! HARD TO STAND-- HARD TO EVEN THINK!

*AND HERE COMES THE HULK!*

I-I MUST HAVE BEEN CRAZY TO TACKLE HIM WHEN I WASN'T FEELING WELL!

B-BUT *WHY* AM I SO WOBBLY! OF COURSE! THE *GREEN FLU!*

I MUST HAVE IT, LIKE EVERY-ONE ELSE!

AND, IF THE HULK IS THE CAUSE, CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HIM MIGHT JUST END UP *KILLING* ME!

YET I'VE GOTTA GET A *BLOOD SAMPLE*--TO LEARN WHETHER I'VE DISCOVERED THE *SOURCE* OF THE *GREEN FLU*--AND PERHAPS A WAY TO COMBAT IT AS WELL, BY NEUTRALIZING THE *GAMMA GENE!*

HUH? WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT? WHAT *WATER?* I'VE NEVER KNOWN A LITTLE *RAIN* TO WORRY THE INCREDIBLE *HULK!*

HULK, LISTEN TO ME-- THE LIVES OF EVERYONE IN THIS CITY MAY HINGE ON YOUR *HELPING* ME!

WATER! WHERE IS *WATER* HULK MUST FIND?!

THIS IS NOT *RIGHT* WATER!

VOICE INSIDE HULK'S HEAD SAYS HULK MUST *REMEMBER!*

REMEMBER? REMEMBER WHAT?

*THAT*, THE AMAZING ARACHNID IS DESTINED NEVER TO KNOW...

...FOR SPIDER-MAN CANNOT VISUALIZE THE MEMORIES SURFACING FROM THE HULK'S SUBCONSCIOUS MIND.

BRUCE, WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU FOR SO LONG!

WE WANT TO HELP!

HELP? WE?

YES! TRUST ME--TRUST US! *HE* CAME TO ME BECAUSE HE'D HEARD OF MY WORK ON *GAMMA GENETICS*. HE OFFERED ME THESE LAB FACILITIES... TO *CURE* YOU!

ELECTRO MED READ-OUT

YOU AND I ARE OLD SCHOOLMATES, BRUCE! I'VE LONG WANTED TO *HELP* YOU! NOW I BELIEVE I'VE FOUND A WAY!

YOU SEE, THE ACCIDENT THAT MADE YOU THE *HULK* MUTATED SOME OF YOUR DNA INTO *GAMMA GENES!* THEY, LIKE THE SICKLED CELLS THAT CAUSE GENETIC ANEMIA IN BLACK PEOPLE--

--ARE WHAT CONTINUALLY TRANSFORM YOU INTO THE *HULK!*

HAVE YOU OBTAINED THE REQUIRED *BLOOD SAMPLE*, DR. KEEGAN?

...A *BLOOD SAMPLE* IS ALL I NEED, HULK! IF I CAN ISOLATE THE *GAMMA GENE* THAT'S CAUSING THE *GREEN FLU...!*

HULK TRUSTS GIRL-- BUT NOT *HIM!*

HUH? HE ACTS LIKE HE'S TALKING TO SOMEBODY A MILLION MILES AWAY!

WHAT GIVES HERE?

AH! A SAMPLE OF BRUCE BANNER'S GAMMA IRRADIATED BLOOD! ONLY ONE HE KNEW--ONE HE TRUSTED--WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN IT!

RIKKY, DON'T YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?

I HAVE TOLD DR. KEEGAN THAT I AM A FRIEND, BANNER -- LIKE YOU, A POOR GAMMA-DEFORMED MONSTER SEEKING A *CURE* FOR US BOTH.

WHAM!
LIAR!!
BUT I DIDN'T SAY ANYTH--!
GNNGG!
SUFFERIN' SPIDER-WEBS! FEVER'S STILL GOT MY SPIDER-SENSE ON THE FRITZ! I DIDN'T EVEN SEE THAT ONE COMING!
HULK MUST GO-- FIND PLACE HULK SEES IN HIS HEAD!
THERE GOES THE HULK!
SKREEEE
LOOK OUT YA GREEN MANIAC!
GREEN? OMIGOSH! IT'S THE HULK!!
SQUEEAL
CRASH
CRIPES! LOOKIT HIM LEAP!
HE'S GREEN-- LIKE THE FLU!
HEY, YEAH!
GOTTA GO AFTER THE HULK--GET THAT BLOOD SAMPLE!
BUT... FEEL... SO WEAK!
HEY, IT'S SPIDER-MAN!
QUIT GAWKIN'! AIN'T YOU EVER SEEN A SUPER HERO BEFORE?
NO!
WELL, NOW YOU HAVE! C'MON, WE GOTTA SEE TO OUR PATIENT!
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THE *HULK*-- WHICH WAY DID HE GO?

GOTTA GO AFTER HIM!

UNHHH!

BUDDY, THE ONLY PLACE YOU'RE GOIN' IS TO THE *HOSPITAL* WITH US! LOOKIT YOUR ARM! YOU'VE GOT THE *GREEN FLU!*

AN' ON TOP OF ALL THIS--

--WE GET A *DOWNPOUR!*

***AVENGERS MANSION*** *HAS BEEN A SCENE OF FRANTIC ACTIVITY EVER SINCE THE ONSET OF THE MYSTERIOUS* ***GREEN FLU.***

ARE YOU ANY CLOSER TO A CURE, YELLOW-JACKET?

IF THERE *IS* ONE, VISION, THE BEAST AND I WILL FIND IT!

OR TURN GREEN OURSELVES--AND I DON'T MEAN WITH ENVY!

THAT'S RIGHT, MR. MAYOR --DOCTORS HENRY PYM AND HANK McCOY, TWO OF THE BEST BIOCHEMISTS IN THE COUNTRY, ARE CHECKING OUT REED RICHARDS' RESEARCH NOTES EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

DON'T GET HIS HOPES UP, CAP. SO FAR EVEN OUR COMPUTERS HAVE COME UP WITH ZILCH.

WASP, I NOTICED YOUR SUDDEN ALARMED REACTION TO SOMETHING ON OUR MONITORS!

OUR TELECOMMUNICATORS ARE PROGRAMMED TO FLASH ANY CITYWIDE *PRIORITY ALERT* TO OUR ATTENTION, JOCASTA--

--AND THEY'VE JUST ANNOUNCED THAT *THE INCREDIBLE HULK* IS IN NEW YORK!!

THE *HULK*--HERE --NOW! OF ALL THE ROTTEN TIMING--!

WAIT A MINUTE, IRON MAN! SOMETHING'S JUST OCCURRED TO ME!

THE HULK IS A PRODUCT OF *GAMMA IRRADIATION*-- AND ALL MR. FANTASTIC'S NOTES AND OUR RESEARCH POINTS TO A *GAMMA SOURCE* FOR THE *GREEN FLU!*

YOU SUSPECT THERE MIGHT BE A LINK BETWEEN THE TWO, YELLOW-JACKET?

IF NOT THE SOURCE, THE HULK MAY BE A *CARRIER*, CAP!

UH, WHICH ONE OF US IS GOING TO *ASK* HIM?

WE *ALL* ARE! IF THERE IS ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE HULK AND THE GREEN FLU, WE'D BETTER CHECK IT OUT-- FAST!

AND THE ONLY WAY TO DO THAT IS TO FIND THE HULK--AND *BRING HIM BACK HERE!*

LET'S GET GO...! UNNH!

*HANK!* WHAT--?

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS!

CAP, HANK'S TURNING-- *GREEN!*

EASY, WASP!

LET'S GET HIM TO THE *MED-LAB* ON THE DOUBLE!

YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, MONSIEUR, SHELLHEAD--

--BUT YOU REALIZE, OF COURSE, THAT THIS MEANS THE *GREEN FLU* HAS INFECTED *AVENGERS MANSION?!*

THE BEAST IS RIGHT, CAP. WE MAY ALL COME DOWN WITH IT, AS YELLOW-JACKET DID!

THEN IT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAT WE FIND THE HULK BEFORE WE SUCCUMB OURSELVES.

*IN THE MED-LAB...*

HOW IS HE, JAN?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW! I'M NO DOCTOR!

SO HOT--! FEEL LIKE MY INSIDES ARE ON FIRE!

REST, HANK. WE'RE GOING AFTER THE HULK!

JARVIS, HAVE YOU SUMMONED *DR. BLAKE?*

YES, CAPTAIN-- BUT HE SAYS HE CANNOT POSSIBLY LEAVE THE GREEN FLU VICTIMS AT THE HOSPITAL NOW.

THEN YOU AND THE WASP STAY WITH YELLOW-JACKET WHILE...

STAY? LIKE FUN I WILL! IF THE HULK SOMEHOW HOLDS SOME PROMISE OF CURING HANK, I'M GOING WITH YOU!

BUT, JAN--!

YOU GONNA ARGUE WITH THE LADY, SHELLHEAD?

I'D SOONER WIGGLE BACKWARDS INTO A RUNAWAY BUZZSAW!

POINT MADE AND ACKNOWLEDGED, BEAST!

OKAY, TEAM-- ***AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!***

*FOLLOWING THEIR RED-WHITE-AND-BLUE LEADER, THE GREATEST SUPER HEROES ON EARTH RACE FOR A HIDDEN RUNWAY...*

*...AND A FUELED-AND-READY **QUINJET!***

*ALL EXCEPT ONE, THAT IS!*

BEAST, WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING BACK THERE?

JUST SLAKING MY THIRST, O'MAN OF METAL!

NO TIME FOR PERRIER, SO PLAIN OLD TAP-WATER'LL HAVE TO DO!

*THE BEAST DRINKS DEEP.*

*SECONDS LATER, A MIGHTY QUINJET ARCS INTO THE EVENING SKY.*

*MEANWHILE, IN NEW YORK'S **CENTRAL PARK**...*

RAIN! RAIN IS *WATER!*

BUT *NOT* WATER HULK MUST FIND!

BUT... *WHY* MUST HULK FIND WATER?

WHAT IS IT IN HULK'S *HEAD* THAT HAS MADE HULK COME *HERE*?

DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, RIKKY! HE'S THE *LEADER*! AN EVIL GENIUS OUT TO RULE THE EARTH!

YOU WERE RIGHT, LEADER! THE GAMMA GENE IS INCREASING BRUCE'S PARANOIA. WHY ELSE WOULD HE SEE YOU--A FRIEND WHO ONLY WANTS TO CURE HIM --AS AN *ENEMY*?

WHY ELSE INDEED, DR. KEEGAN?

LEADER LIED TO GIRL!

BUT HOW CAN HULK TELL GIRL LEADER LIED?

HULK DOES NOT EVEN KNOW WHO GIRL IS?!?

BANNER IS ANESTHETIZED NOW, DR. KEEGAN.

YOU MAY CONTINUE WITH YOUR EXPERIMENTS.

I WASN'T ANESTHETIZED! I FOUGHT THE DRUGS BY MAKING MYSELF ANGRY, AND THAT TRIGGERED THE CHANGE IN MY BIOCHEMISTRY THAT PRECEDES MY BECOMING THE *HULK*!

CAN'T CHANGE YET, THOUGH! AS THE HULK, I'D BE TOO MINDLESS TO STOP THE LEADER!

I'VE GOT TO FIND SOME WAY TO TRANSFER SOME OF WHAT *I*--*BRUCE BANNER*--KNOW INTO THE HULK'S BRUTISH BRAIN! BUT HOW?

BRUCE HAS ESCAPED! FIND HIM, BEFORE HE HURTS HIMSELF!

POOR RIKKY! THE LEADER'S DUPED HER THROUGH HER OWN GOOD INTENTIONS!

YOUR SHIP--*OMNIVAC*--IS SO HUGE, LEADER! IT WILL BE HOURS BEFORE WE FIND BRUCE!

THERE ARE OTHER METHODS ONE MAY USE TO SEARCH, DOCTOR!

LEADER'S *MIND* IS STRONG LIKE HULK'S *MUSCLES* ARE STRONG!

THERE IS NOWHERE YOU CAN RUN TO, DR. BANNER--NOWHERE YOU CAN HIDE!

THE *LEADER* --HE'S FOUND ME!

COME BACK, DR. BANNER! SURRENDER! I HAVE NOT LIED TO DR. KEEGAN! I DO INTEND TO *CURE* YOU...

...SO THAT YOUR ABOMINABLE ALTER-EGO--THE *HULK*--DOES NOT MINDLESSLY INTERFERE WITH MY *CONQUEST* OF THE *WORLD!*

NO! I'LL FIND SOME WAY TO *STOP* YOU!

I'LL MAKE THE *HULK* UNDERSTAND THE *MENACE* YOU POSE!

MAKE HULK... UNDERSTAND...?

THE MENACE IN THE *WATER*--A MENACE YOU'VE DERIVED WITH RIKKY'S HELP FROM MY OWN *GAMMA-IRRADIATED BLOOD!*

IT'S IN THE WATER! THE *WATER!* THE *WATER!*

*WHAT IS IN WATER!!?*

THERE'S THE *HULK*, AVENGERS!

BUT WHY'S HE *SCREAMING* TO HIMSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PARK?

THE SCREAM OF A DESCENDING QUINJET CUTS THE BEAST'S QUESTION SHORT...

THE HULK MAKES NO MOVE TO FLEE.

WHY *SHOULD* HE, VISION? LOOK AT THE SIZE OF HIM!

YOU'RE NOT SCARED OF A MERE MASS OF MUSCLES, ARE YOU, WONDY?

CUT THE CLOWNING, BEAST! WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE HULK--

--BEFORE THE GREEN FLU GETS US!

OUTSIDE...

SHIP FROM SKY HAS LANDED NEAR HULK!

NOW COSTUMED HUMANS COME OUT!

HULK KNOWS COSTUMED HUMANS! HULK HAS FOUGHT THEM BEFORE!

SPLAP!

THAT'S RIGHT, HULK--AND YOU'LL FIGHT THE *AVENGERS* AGAIN!

I AM EVER AMAZED BY THE BRUTE'S STRENGTH. HE SHRUGS OFF IRON MAN'S *REPULSOR RAYS* WITH EASE.

THE HULK USED TO BE AN AVENGER HIMSELF!

HAD HE REMAINED, WHAT *POWER* HE WOULD HAVE ADDED TO OUR RANKS!

WHAT'S THAT MAKE *THOR* AND *ME*, CAP --CHOPPED LIVER?

BUT I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! IF ONLY THE HULK WEREN'T SO SAVAGE, SO UNCONTROLLABLE! IF ONLY THE *BRUCE BANNER* HALF OF HIS IDENTITY WAS DOMINANT--!

BANNER! BANNER! BANNER! HULK HATES BANNER!

IT WAS BANNER WHO MADE HULK COME HERE WHERE HEROES ATTACK HULK!

UH-OH! I DON'T KNOW IF EVEN MY ARMOR CAN SUSTAIN A DIRECT BLOW FROM AN ANGRY HULK!

YOU WON'T HAVE TO PUT IT TO THE TEST, IRON MAN!

MY WASP-STING WILL DISTRACT THE HULK 'TIL YOU GET FREE!

WASP, PULL OUT OF THERE! IRON MAN'S NOT EVEN STRUGGLING TO FREE HIMSELF! HE'S ACTING DIZZY --DISORIENTED-- LIKE...!

IT'S... THE GREEN FLU, CAP! I... GUESS... I'VE GOT IT! UNNGH!

KCHOK!

IRON MAN!

BRAK!

THE GOLDEN AVENGER DOES NOT RESPOND, CAPTAIN AMERICA.

SHELLHEAD'S DOWN FOR THE COUNT!

THAT MEANS IT'S UP TO THE REST OF US!

HAVE WE THE POWER TO STOP THE HULK?

HAS ANYONE, JOCASTA?

IT IS A QUESTION WHICH WILL SOON HAVE AN ANSWER, CAPTAIN-- ONCE THE VISION'S BODY ACHIEVES ITS ABSOLUTE DENSITY AND BEARS THE BEHEMOTH DOWN.

HUNH? RED-FACE HAS SUDDENLY BECOME AS SOLID AS A MOUNTAIN!

BUT HULK HAS SMASHED MOUNTAINS BEFORE!

KWUMP!

--HAD I NOT ALTERED MY DENSITY AND BECOME INTANGIBLE AT THE LAST POSSIBLE INSTANT,

WHERE MY STRENGTH WAS INADEQUATE, MY *EYEBEAMS* MUST SUFFICE.

INCREDIBLE. I HAVE TURNED MY BODY DIAMOND-HARD --YET I BELIEVE THE HULK COULD HAVE *SHATTERED* IT--

NO DICE, VISION--YOU'RE ONLY ANGERING HIM FURTHER--AND HE'S JUST DECKED THE BEAST!

NO! IT WAS THE GREEN FLU THAT DOWNED THE BEAST--

--EVEN AS IT FELLED IRON MAN!

NEVER... FELT SO... SICK... BEFORE, CAP.

REST, SHELL-HEAD--

--AND SOMEHOW WE'LL CARRY ON WITHOUT YOU!

BRAVE WORDS...

*...IN THE FACE OF AN ANGRY HULK.*

HULK WANTS TO FIGHT YOU --TO SMASH YOU ALL!

BUT WORDS IN HULK'S HEAD TELL HULK TO FIND--

--WHAT *PICTURES* IN HULK'S HEAD SHOW HULK MUST BE HERE!

GOOD LORD! HE'S TORN UP THE EARTH WITH HIS BARE HANDS!

AND, BENEATH IT--!!

*BENEATH IT--WHAT??*

LOCKED INTO A GEO-SYNCHRONOUS ORBIT, THE SPACE STATION THAT IS A COMPUTER --OMNIVAC--HANGS OMINOUSLY ABOVE THE EARTH...

OHH, I FEEL SO ILL! LEADER, HELP ME!

WHY, MY DEAR DOCTOR KEEGAN-- WHATEVER IS THE MATTER? ILL, YOU SAY? STRANGE, I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LOOKING BETTER. THE PALE GREEN PALLOR BECOMES YOU...

...AND THE SIGHT OF YOUR ELONGATED FOREHEAD FIRES MY EMERALD BLOOD WITH DESIRE.

YOU--YOU MAKE IT SOUND AS IF I LOOK LIKE... *YOU!*

EXACTLY LIKE ME, MY DARLING. *MADE* IN MY OWN IMAGE, YOU MIGHT SAY.

MADE--?

OF COURSE, I-- THE *LEADER*-- AM THE GREATEST INTELLECT ALIVE UPON THE EARTH.

BUT MINE IS A LONELY EXISTENCE. FOR SOME TIME I HAVE CRAVED A MATE--ONE PHYSICALLY ATTRACTIVE TO ME AND MY INTELLECTUAL EQUAL.

TH-THEN YOU WERE NEVER LOOKING FOR A *CURE* FOR BRUCE BANNER?! YOU WERE MERELY AFTER THE *GAMMA GENE* THAT TURNS HIM INTO THE HULK--

--TO MAKE *ME* A *MONSTER* AS WELL?!?

MONSTER, MY DEAR? NOT AT ALL! YOU LOOK STUNNING... TO *ME* AT ANY RATE.

BUT YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE I HAVE CHOSEN TO RAISE FROM THE COMMON HUMAN HERD.

INDEED, SOON THERE WILL BE *NO* COMMONALITY OF HUMANITY! SOON THE ENTIRE WORLD WILL BE GREEN! *GREEN! GREEN!*

WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU RAVING ABOUT?!

RAVING, MY DEAR DR. KEEGAN? *MADMEN* RAVE! I AM MERELY BOASTING OF MY ACHIEVEMENTS. LOOK ABOUT YOU! DO YOU NOT SEE THE MACHINERY *OMNIVAC* HAS CREATED FOR ME?

I SEE VAST VATS OF... *WATER!*

WATER, YES! WATER IRRADIATED WITH THE *GAMMA GENE* YOU SO WILLINGLY EXTRACTED FOR ME FROM YOUR OLD FRIEND, *BRUCE BANNER!*

WATER WHICH, EVEN NOW, HUMANITY IS *DRINKING...*

...WATER WHICH IS MAKING THEM TURN *GREEN.*

"SOME IT WILL TRANSFORM INTO MINDLESS MINIONS, STRIKINGLY SIMILAR TO THE HULK.

"OTHERS, POSSESSED OF SOMEWHAT GREATER INTELLIGENCE, SHALL SERVE AS SHOCK-TROOPS--

"--UNBEATABLE WARRIORS LEADING MY CONQUEST OF THE EARTH.

"OTHERS--SUCH AS YOURSELF--WILL ATTAIN INTELLIGENCE *NEARLY* AS GREAT AS MY OWN.

"THEY SHALL STAND BESIDE ME, ADVISE ME, AND HELP ME HOLD ALL MY LESSER SUBJECTS IN THRALL.

"OF COURSE, SOME OF THOSE INFECTED BY THE GAMMA GENE WILL SIMPLY... DIE!"

THAT'S HORRIBLE! YOU HAVEN'T THE RIGHT!

I AM THE *LEADER*, DR. KEEGAN. I *MAKE* THE RIGHT!

BUT, COME--YOUR SUDDEN TRANSFORMATION HAS LEFT YOU CONFUSED.

REST. GROW ACCUSTOMED TO THE DAZZLING VISTAS ENHANCED INTELLECT NOW OPENS BEFORE YOU--

--AND SOON, I ASSURE YOU, YOU WILL WELCOME WHOLEHEARTEDLY THE PROSPECT OF BECOMING MY *BRIDE!*

MEANWHILE, BACK IN CENTRAL PARK...

THE HULK HAS UNCOVERED A HIDDEN SHAFTWAY BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE SHEEP MEADOW!

I KNOW THEY RECENTLY REFURBISHED THE MEADOW-- BUT, STILL, *THIS* SHOULDN'T BE HERE!

SOMEHOW THE *HULK* KNEW THAT IT WOULD BE WHEN HE TORE UP THE SOD!

DO WE FOLLOW THE HULK, CAPTAIN AMERICA?

THOSE OF US UNAFFECTED BY THE *GREEN FLU* WILL, JOCASTA.

WE CAN'T JUST *LEAVE* SHELLHEAD, THE BEAST, AND THE WASP!

PEOPLE ALL OVER NEW YORK ARE TURNING GREEN AND LAPSING INTO COMAS, WONDER-MAN!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE NEXT STAGE IS, MAY-BE DEATH.

IF FOLLOWING THE HULK WILL SOMEHOW LEAD US TO A CURE-- THEN WE *FOLLOW!*

*FOLLOW* THEY DO, FOR THEY ARE *AVEN-GERS.*

I GUESS THAT'S LIFE IN THE BIG LEAGUES.

BELOW, THE HULK HAS DISCOVERED A SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL UNDERNEATH THE CITY...

...A TUNNEL WHICH CARRIES WATER FROM DISTANT RESERVOIRS.

WATER! WHAT MUST HULK KNOW ABOUT...

...WATER, DR. BANNER, INFUSED WITH YOUR GAMMA GENE--

--IS THE SIMPLE SECRET THAT WILL MAKE ME MASTER OF THE WORLD!

YOU'LL NEVER SUCCEED, LEADER! I'LL STOP YOU! THE HULK WILL STOP YOU!

THE HULK! HA HA

HA HA HA HA

LEADER LAUGHED AT HULK!

NOBODY LAUGHS AT HULK!

SKROOM!

LEADER LAUGHED BECAUSE LEADER THOUGHT HULK WAS TOO DUMB TO REMEMBER LEADER'S SECRET!

BUT HULK REMEMBERS!

LEADER'S SECRET IS IN THE WATER!

WATER. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF GALLONS OF IT POURING IN CRASHING CASCADES EVERY SECOND--INTO PIPELINES THAT ARE THE VERITABLE ARTERIES OF THIS GREAT METROPOLIS.

TODAY, THOSE ARTERIES ARE DISEASED--INFECTED BY GAMMA-IRRADIATED GENES...

WHICH ARE TOO SMALL FOR THE CITY'S PURIFICATION SYSTEMS TO FILTER OUT.

IT IS UP TO THE HULK THEN, TO STOP THE LEADER'S PLANS.

THERE HE IS, AVENGERS!

BUT WHY'S HE ATTACKING THE WATER PURIFYING SYSTEM, CAP?

THE WHAT--? LOOK AT THOSE MACHINES, WONDER-MAN! THE THE CITY NEVER EMPLOYED TECHNOLOGY AS ADVANCED AS THAT!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS YET, BUT I THINK THE HULK HAS LED US TO THE *SOURCE* OF THE *GREEN FLU!*

COSTUMED HEROES ATTACK HULK AGAIN?! GO AWAY! LET HULK DO WHAT HULK *MUST* DO!

WE HAVEN'T COME TO ATTACK, HULK--BUT TO *HELP!* HIT THOSE *MACHINES*, AVENGERS--AND HIT THEM *HARD!*

THEY DO.

AND NO SOONER IS THE TASK ACCOMPLISHED, THAN...

I HAD A FEELING MACHINERY AS COMPLEX AS THAT WOULD HAVE A BUILT-IN ALARM!

WHAT MANNER OF BEINGS ARE THESE THAT TELEPORT INTO THE WATER-TUNNEL, CAPTAIN AMERICA?

HULK KNOWS THEM! THEY ARE *HUMANOIDS!*

THE LEGIONS OF THE LEADER!

THEY ARE, AND THEY ATTACK.

BUT THIS TIME, THE HULK DOES NOT BATTLE THEM ALONE.

NO MATTER HOW HARD WE HIT THESE GUYS, CAP-- THEY JUST BOUNCE BACK!

THEY SEEM TO BE MADE OUT OF SOME KIND OF PLASTIC!

THEIR STRENGTH LIES IN RESILIENCY ...AND NUMBERS!

INCAPABLE OF FEELING PAIN, THE HUMANOIDS ATTACK AND ATTACK AND ATTACK AGAIN...

...AS THE **LEADER** MENTALLY MANIPULATES THEM FROM AFAR.

SOMEHOW THE ACCURSED HULK HAS FOUND MY MACHINERY--

--BUT I SHALL REBUILD IT UPON HIS BONES!

BRUCE BANNER'S BONES YOU MEAN, LEADER--THE MAN I MISTAKENLY BELIEVED YOU WANTED TO ***HELP!***

DR. KEEGAN--RIKKY--***WHAT*** ARE YOU DOING?!

H-HOW ARE YOU ***DOING*** WHAT YOU'RE DOING?!?

IT'S THE ***GAMMA GENE*** YOU MUTATED ME WITH, LEADER! YOU DIDN'T ANTICIPATE THAT IT MIGHT INCREASE ***MY*** MENTAL ABILITIES, WHICH WERE SO MUCH GREATER THAN YOUR OWN TO BEGIN WITH*--

--SO THAT I COULD DO MORE WITH MY MIND THAN MERELY ***THINK!*** I CAN ALSO TELEKINETICALLY... ***DESTROY!***

WAVES OF PURE THOUGHT SHATTER THE MACHINERY ABOARD ***OMNIVAC***...

*UNTIL EXPOSED TO GAMMA RAYS, THE LEADER WAS A SIMPLE LABORER--AL.

...AND, MILES AWAY, THE LEADER'S HUMANOID CREATIONS LAPSE INTO IMMOBILITY.

I DON'T GET IT! THEY HAD ***US*** COLD--NOW THEY'RE FROZEN IN THEIR TRACKS!

AVENGERS, WE ARE OBSERVED.

TWO BEINGS STARING DOWN AT US FROM THE SHADOWS!

BOTH... GREEN!

SO, DOCTOR--YOU HAVE TELEKINETICALLY TRANSPORTED US FROM OMNIVAC INTO THE ARMS OF MY FOES!

THE AVENGERS WILL ANALYZE THE WATER, DISCOVER THE GAMMA GENE, AND DEVISE A CURE!

I HAVE BEEN DEFEATED BY THE VERY ONE I WAS FOOLISH ENOUGH... TO LOVE!

OHHH!

RIKKY!

AMAZINGLY, THE VOICE THAT CRIES OUT IS NOT THE HULK'S... BUT BRUCE BANNER'S!

MURDERER! MURDERER!

KEEP BACK, YOU BRAINLESS BRUTE!

I MERELY SHOT THE WOMAN FULL OF A GAMMA ANTIDOTE!

SHE WAS UNWORTHY TO BE MY BRIDE--SHE WILL SOON REVERT TO NORMAL--! UNNHH!

BUT THE HULK'S BRIEF MOMENT OF LUCIDITY IS SUBMERGED ONCE AGAIN IN HIS RAGE...

...EVEN AS THE LETHAL LEADER IS SUBMERGED IN THE RAGING, GAMMA-IRRADIATED FLOOD.

BOTH THE LEADER AND THE HULK HAVE BEEN SWEPT AWAY!

DID YOU SEE? THE LEADER WAS *GREEN* --LIKE THE HULK!

LIKE WE MAY *ALL* SOON BE, UNLESS WE GET THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SERVICE TO DECONTAMINATE THE CITY'S WATER, WONDER-MAN.

SHE'S UNCONSCIOUS, VISION, BUT ALREADY LOSING HER GREEN PALLOR.

THE WOMAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA, IS SHE--?

THUS WE KNOW THAT THE LEADER'S ANTIDOTE WORKED, AND WE CAN GET BUSY DUPLICATING IT.

THANK HEAVENS FOR THE HULK!

FOR WHAT, CAPTAIN?

FOR LEADING US HERE, JOCASTA. FOR SOMEHOW *KNOWING* WHAT TO DO AND WHERE TO GO.

SOMEHOW... SOMEWAY ...THE MIND OF BRUCE BANNER--THE *MAN* WITHIN THE MONSTER--MANAGED TO FIND THE SOLUTION. WE OWE HIM MORE THAN WE CAN EVER REPAY.

COME ON, AVENGERS--LET'S GET TO WORK.

*FINIS*

MARVEL
BONUS
PIN-UP
DOC
SAMSON:
WORLD'S
STRONGEST
PSYCHIATRIST!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **DOC SAMSON**

SPECIAL EDITORI-AL ASIDE: CHECK IT OUT TRUE BELIEVERS, THIS IS FRANK MILLER'S VERY FIRST PENCIL JOB FOR MARVEL. HE AND JO DUFFY ORIGINALLY CRAFTED THIS LITTLE TALE SEVERAL YEARS AGO. THEY'VE BOTH GROWN SINCE THEN--BUT EVEN THIS EARLY WORK DISPLAYS THE PROMISE OF THINGS TO COME. ENJOY.

MARY JO DUFFY WORDS | FRANK MILLER PENCILS | STEVE MITCHELL INKS | JIM NOVAK LETTERS | BOB SHAREN COLORS | ALLEN MILGROM EDITING | JIM SHOOTER EDIT-IN-CHIEFING

# UNUS UNCHAINED!

BANK

THE TITLE OF THIS LECTURE IS "THE ALIENATED MUTANT IN OUR SOCIETY." UNUS, THE MAN IN CHAINS, IS AN EXPERT ON THE SUBJECT AS WELL AS A LIVING EXAMPLE OF IT.

HE'S A MUTANT WITH THE UNIQUE ABILITY TO PROJECT A FORCE FIELD SO POWERFUL THAT IT REPELS ANY-ONE AND ANYTHING HE CHOOSES. AND, UNTIL HIS MOST RECENT CAPTURE, THAT POWER MADE HIM A TRULY UNTOUCHABLE INDIVIDUAL.

WILL YOU LOOK AT WHAT THAT GUY CAN DO?! ARE YOU SURE THOSE CHAINS CAN HOLD HIM?

YEAH... THE WARDEN WOULD NEVER HAVE OKAYED THIS IF THERE WERE ANY DANGER.

--FREE!!

CHUNK

DR. LEONARD SAMSON IS TAKING A WORKING HOLIDAY BY ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE...

EXCUSE ME, BUT COULD I BORROW A PEN? THIS ONE SEEMS TO BE OUT OF INK.

OF COURSE...

HMM... GREEN HAIR... AN OBVIOUS ATTENTION-GETTING DEVICE! I WONDER WHAT HE'S TRYING TO SAY WITH IT...

VERY STRANGE...

OH, NO! LOOK--UP ON THE STAGE! HE'S GOING TO BREAK--

NO, DON'T SHOOT! THE BULLETS ARE JUST GOING TO BOUNCE OFF HIM!

YEAH, ISN'T IT GREAT?

ZING

KA-ZING

I CAN'T BELIEVE THE AUTHORITIES WERE DUMB ENOUGH TO LET ME OUT OF JAIL WHEN ALL I HAD TO DO ONCE I WAS OUTSIDE, WAS REPEL THOSE CHAINS AND BREAK THEM...

AND NOW THERE AREN'T ENOUGH COPS OR SUPER HEROES IN THE WORLD TO EVER GET ME BEHIND BARS AGAIN.

MAYBE NOT, BUT THERE'S AT LEAST ONE MAN HERE WHO'S GOING TO TRY.

LEONARD SAMSON'S VERDANT HAIR IS NEITHER AN AFFECTATION NOR THE MANIFESTATION OF SOME BIZARRE PSYCHOSIS.

IT'S ONE OF THE FEW OUTWARD SIGNS THAT HE WAS SUBJECTED TO A NEAR-LETHAL BLAST OF GAMMA RADIATION THAT LEFT HIM THE STRONGEST MORTAL THIS SIDE OF THE HULK.

THE CROWD AROUND ME IS PANICKING. THEY'RE ACCUSTOMED TO MADNESS, BUT NOT VIOLENCE. I'LL HAVE TO ACT QUICKLY, BEFORE SOMEONE IS HURT.

WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE?

THE NAME IS SAMSON --DOC SAMSON, AND I SUGGEST YOU SURRENDER QUIETLY.

ALL RIGHT, I CAN BE A SPORT ABOUT THIS. GO AHEAD! TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT...

... DUNCE!

SAMSON HAS ONLY HIMSELF TO BLAME...

...AFTER ALL, UNUS'S CONFIDENCE SHOULD HAVE TIPPED HIM OFF.

HAH! IT WORKS EVERY TIME!

SPANG

WHA--?!

THE FORCE FIELD, YOU IDIOT! I'M UNUS THE *UNTOUCHABLE*, REMEMBER? YOU'LL NEVER GET NEAR ME UNLESS I WANT YOU TO--

--AND I DON'T WANT YOU TO!

KRRUMM

WHUD

CRASH

NOW, THAT'S WHAT I CALL BRINGING THE HOUSE DOWN!

AND ANOTHER SUPER-CLOWN BITES THE DUST! I GUESS I'VE SEEN THE LAST OF HIM!

TAK-

*PERHAPS, UNUS...*

*...PERHAPS NOT!*

UNUS...

WHAT?!

GRRREEEAAK

I'M NOT FINISHED WITH YOU YET!

OKAY... IF YOU REALLY WANT TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF, I'LL BE HAPPY TO OBLIGE. I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH PLANNED FOR THIS AFTERNOON--JUST KNOCKING OVER A BANK OR TWO--SO YOU TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU WANT.

IT SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO LONG TO MAKE YOU SWALLOW THAT ARROGANT SMILE!

TERRIFIC.

OOPS.

POOOING

LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU FIGURE OUT HOW TO DO THAT.

THIS TIME, SAMSON'S REBOUND IS SPECTACULAR, BLASTING HIM OUT OF THE BUILDING AND INTO THE STREET, WHERE MOST OF THE FRIGHTENED MOB HAS HAD TIME TO CLEAR AWAY.

KREK

TWINK TINKLE

IT SEEMS LIKE THE STRONGER YOU GUYS ARE, THE STUPIDER YOU GET.

AND, SAMSON, YOU PROBABLY RATE WITH THE HULK ON BOTH COUNTS.

:OOF: HALF RIGHT, UNUS. YOU SEE, I AM NEARLY AS STRONG AS THE HULK, BUT I'M ALSO CONSIDERABLY SMARTER.

I'VE JUST BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME OUTSIDE SO I COULD DO--

--THIS!

HEYY--!

SMOKK

NOW, WHY DON'T WE FIND OUT JUST HOW POWERFUL THAT FORCE FIELD OF YOURS REALLY IS?

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO--?

NO!

UPSY-DAISY!

NO, PLEASE-- HELP!

KONG

HMM, NOT BAD. I SEE WHY YOU MUTANTS CALL YOURSELVES HOMO *SUPERIOR.*

LET ME DOWN! I'M GETTING AIRSICK!

MAYBE I SHOULD. IF YOU REBOUND AGAIN, IT WILL PROBABLY SEND YOU INTO ORBIT.

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN COPE WITH THAT MUCH ALIENATION?

NO!

*DOC SAMSON DOESN'T WANT TO KILL UNUS, BUT UNLESS HE CAN ABSORB ENOUGH OF THE IMPACT TO KEEP THE MUTANT FROM CRUSHING HIMSELF AGAINST SAMSON'S TITANIUM-HARD FRAME, UNUS WILL DIE!*

OF COURSE, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN HELP YOU WHILE YOUR FORCE FIELD IS UP.

I'LL DROP IT, ANYTHING YOU SAY, ONLY CATCH ME, PLEASE!

:UNNGH:

DID IT!

YOU...YOU DID! JEEZ, I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT, I'M SURE THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES WILL BE GLAD TO OBLIGE.

I'M GOING TO RETURN YOU TO THEM PERSONALLY... AND UNUS--THIS TIME I SUGGEST YOU STAY BEHIND BARS.

THE END.

*The Incredible Hulk* #258 cover original art
by Frank Miller & Al Milgrom

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Hulk reprint title *Marvel Super-Heroes* had to split its reprint of *The Incredible Hulk* #145's 33-page story over two issues, so Frank Miller & Klaus Janson drew this new title page for *Marvel Super-Heroes* #95 (March 1981).

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A MARVEL® COMICS LIMITED SERIES

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

# MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS™

FEATURING EVERY SINGLE SUPER HERO ON EARTH--IN THE GREATEST BATTLE OF ALL!

J.R.J.R. + LAYTON

## WHEN HEROES GATHER...

*Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions* was originally planned as a Treasury-format sequel to *Marvel Treasury Edition* #25. After the United States boycotted the 1980 Summer Olympics in the U.S.S.R., the story was shelved. Two years and a bit of reworking later, it was released as Marvel's first Limited Series.

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

# A GATHERING OF HEROES!

CHAPTER 1

Story
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JIM SHOOTER

I THINK I NEED MORE WEIGHT, *WANDA!* I'M NOT EVEN WORKING UP A SWEAT!

HOW *MUCH* MORE, WONDER MAN? YOU'RE PRESSING TWO TONS NOW!

CARE TO DO ANOTHER 50 LAPS, VISION?

WHY NOT, IRON MAN? ANDROIDS DO NOT TIRE.

BEAST, WOULD YOU MIND WATCHING WHERE YOU'RE BOUNCING?

YOU ALMOST KNOCKED THE WASP OFF THE RINGS!

BEAST, WE WON'T KEEP HAVING THESE LITTLE GET-TOGETHERS FOR OUR FAVORITE FORMER MEMBERS IF YOU CAN'T LEARN TO BEHAVE!

SORRY, CAP! IT'S JUST SUCH A GAS TO BE BACK IN *AVENGERS MANSION*--EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR A VISIT! *THE DEFENDERS* JUST DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO COMPARE WITH THIS!



I GUESS YOU'RE GETTING A LITTLE RUSTY NOW THAT YOU'RE NO LONGER A REGULAR!

*RUSTY*? ME? HA! I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAL! IF I CAN GO AGAINST ALL SIX OF YOU FOR ONE MINUTE--

--WILL YOU APOLOGIZE AND COME UPSTAIRS AND PARTY WITH ME?

YOU'RE ON, AVENGER!

I'VE GOT HIM! WHOOPS!

HE'S USING WONDER-MAN AS A SPRINGBOARD!

LEAPING RIGHT PAST US!

FOR A FULL THIRTY SECONDS THE BLUDGEONING BEAST ELUDES HIS TEAMMATES...

COME ON, GROUP! A LITTLE TEAM-WORK, PLEASE!

YOU'RE FAST AND YOU'RE AGILE, HANK-- THERE'S NO DENYING THAT!

YET NO ONE INDIVIDUAL CAN STAND AGAINST EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES!

UH-OH!

GOT HIM!

BUT SOME-THING ELSE HAS GOT US!!

BAMF!

WITH THE MEREST RIPPLE IN THE FABRIC OF SPACE, THE MIGHTY AVENGERS VANISH--!

MEANWHILE, ABOVE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE ON THE FROZEN ISLE OF NOVAYA ZEMLYA...

THE STATE HAS DARED TO LABEL THE *RED GHOST* AN ENEMY! *HA!* THE VERY SCIENTIFIC GENIUS THEY MOCKED WILL UNLEASH A SERIES OF MIGHTY EARTH TREMORS...

...WHICH WILL TOPPLE THEIR GREATEST CITIES FROM LENINGRAD TO MOSCOW!

BUT, BEFORE THE RED GHOST CAN LAUNCH HIS CATASTROPHIC ASSAULT...

HOLD, VILLAIN, IN THE NAME OF THE STATE!

STOP HIM!

SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS... STRIKE!

LENIN'S BEARD! DARKSTAR, CRIMSON DYNAMO, VANGUARD AND URSA MAJOR!

MY ARMOR'S SENSORS LED US TO YOUR LAIR, GHOST!

FOOLS! HOW CAN YOU ATTACK ONE WHO CAN BECOME INTANGIBLE AT WILL?

MOTHER RUSSIA! EVEN THE MIGHTY MALLET OF *VANGUARD* PASSES THROUGH THE TRAITOR!

TRUE ENOUGH, HERO OF THE HOMELAND-- BUT THE FACT THAT *I* AM UNTOUCHABLE DOES NOT MEAN THAT MY WEAPONS CANNOT HARM YOU!

VANGUARD, DOWN!

NOW, COMRADES, WHILE YOU EXERCISE YOUR POWERS TO DISMANTLE THE RED GHOST'S MALIGNANT MACHINERY--

--DARKSTAR WILL ATTEND TO THE TRAITOR HIMSELF!

TEACHING HIM THAT, IMMATERIAL OR NOT, NO MAN MAY HIDE FROM MY *DARKFORCE!*

ARRGHH! NUMBING COLD CLUTCHING AT MY VERY SOUL!

HAVE MERCY, WOMAN! MERCY!

AS MUCH MERCY AS YOU WOULD HAVE SHOWN OUR HELPLESS CITIZENRY, GHOST!

URSA MAJOR, USE YOUR GREAT STRENGTH! SEIZE HIM!

AT ONCE, DARK-STAR!

COMRADES, SUDDENLY A STRANGE GLOW EMBRACES US ALL!

WHAT TRICK IS THIS, RED GHOST?

BAMMF!

EH? 'TWAS NO TRICK OF MY DOING. THE SUPER-SOLDIERS HAVE VANISHED!

AT THAT MOMENT, A HALF A WORLD AWAY...

HEY, GARCON! COULD I HAVE MY BUBBLY WITH A BEER CHASER?

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TONIGHT WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE AS OUR GUESTS--

--THE FABULOUS *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

NAIP

AL ASSOCIATIO

MENT A

SNIFF!

WHATSAMATTER, LADY? YOU GOT SINUS TROUBLE?

SIS, THERE ISN'T A CHICK UNDER 40 HERE!

OH, JOHNNY-- HONESTLY!

AND NOW, WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, I'M PROUD TO PRESENT-- THE LEADER OF THE GREATEST SUPER-TEAM THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN--

REED RICHARDS-- *MISTER FANTASTIC!*

THE HONOR OF SPEAKING BEFORE THE ADVENTURERS CLUB IS ALL MINE!

YAWN! THERE GOES ANY CHANCE OF CATCHIN' THE LATE SHOW, HOTSHOT! ONCE OL' STRETCH STARTS JAWIN', THE EVENIN'S SHOT!

AW, REED'S SPEECHES USUALLY GET KIND OF INTERESTING... AROUND THE SECOND HOUR!

BEN! JOHNNY! WOULD YOU TWO SIT QUIETLY AND ACT YOUR AGES? I SWEAR, IT'S WORSE THAN CHAPERONING TWO CHILDREN!

BESIDES, IT'S NOT REED THEY WANT TO HEAR...

IT'S YOU, BEN! GO AHEAD, BIG FELLA!

WHO? WHAT? ME? WHADDO I DO, TORCHY-- RECITE "BOOTS"?

WHY, BENJY, YOU'RE EMBARRASSED! YOUR ROCKS ARE TURNING RED!

IT AIN'T ME THAT'S RED, KID! IT'S THIS WEIRD--

BAMMF!

--GLOW!

OH, MY WORD! THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE GONE!

AND I HADN'T EVEN SERVED THE RASPBERRY MOUSSE!

THE SLEEK SILVER CRAFT SLICES THE SUNLIT SKIES OVER CANADA'S NORTHWESTERN TERRITORIES...

WHILE, INSIDE THE AIRSHIP, RECOVERING FROM A RE-CONNAISSANCE MISSION--

--RESTS THE CANADIAN SUPER-TEAM... ALPHA FLIGHT!

IT WILL BE GOOD TO GET BACK TO OTTAWA, SASQUATCH!

WHY, NORTH-STAR? I LIKED IT IN THE WILDS!

IT WAS SNOWBIRD'S ELEMENT, ALSO!

I'D RATHER GET BACK TO TEACHING SCHOOL IN QUEBEC!

THERE IS MUCH TO RECOMMEND BOTH WORLDS, AURORA!

LEAVE IT TO YOU TO SEE BOTH SIDES OF THE QUESTION, SHAMAN!

BUT NOT EVEN FLIGHT-LEADER VINDICATOR NOTICES THE RED GLOW ENVELOPING THEM ALL...

NOT THAT HE COULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO PREVENT HIS AND HIS TEAMMATES' DISAPPEARANCES IF HE HAD!

BAMF!

SECONDS LATER, FAR TO THE SOUTHEAST, THE SCENE REPEATS ITSELF IN THE DANGER ROOM OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN!

BAMMF!

ALL OVER NEW YORK, THE MYSTERIOUS DEMATERIALIZATIONS OF SUPER HEROES CONTINUES!

IN HARLEM...

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST! WE'RE SUNK!

BUT WHY ARE THEY GLOWING?!

BAMF!

THEY AIN'T GLOWING-- THEY'RE GONE!!

IN MIDTOWN MANHATTAN...

HUH? MY SPIDER-SENSE IS SUDDENLY TINGLING LIKE CRAZY!

CRIPES! AS IF THE PIGEONS WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH!

BAMF!

GEE, I DIDN'T KNOW SPIDER-MAN COULD TURN INVISIBLE!

IN A FASHIONABLE SOHO ROCK CLUB...

SEE, VALKYRIE! I TOLD YA THE *DAZZLER* WAS SWELL!

HER SINGING *IS* ENTRANCING, HELLCAT-- BUT I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE RED LIGHTS THAT SEEM TO BATHE HER!

WHAT A FINALE! THE DAZZLER'S DIS-APPEARED!

BAMF!

NOR IS SHE ALONE!

OVER STATEN ISLAND...

DAREDEVIL! SUDDENLY THERE'S A RED GLOW SURROUNDING US!

BEING BLIND, I CAN'T SEE WHAT MOON-KNIGHT'S REFERRING TO!

BUT I DEFINITELY *FEEL* SOMETHING... STRANGE!

IN THE **SAVAGE LAND**...

SHANNA! YOU'RE GLOWING!

IN THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SANCTORUM OF MYSTIC MASTER DOCTOR STRANGE...

DEVIL-SLAYER! WE ARE IN THE GRIP OF SOME UNIDENTIFIABLE FORCE!

HIGH ABOVE THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO...

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME, SPIDER-WOMAN!

CAN THIS ENERGY COCOON BE THE WORK OF GYPSY MOTH?

OVER THE HUDSON RIVER...

EH? SOME STRANGE FORCE IS REGISTERING ON MY CIRCUITRY!

...MACHINE MAN VANISHES WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD!

AT THE UPSTATE NEW YORK ENERGY RESEARCH CENTER, **PROJECT PEGASUS**...

MR. HART, THANKS FOR LETTING US CONDUCT THESE ENERGY TESTS...

HEY, QUASAR! IS YOUR ENERGY LEAKING?

SOMEWHERE IN THE GREAT SOUTHWEST...

HULK WILL SMASH DOC SAMSON!

WAIT! THIS EERIE RED GLOW SUDDENLY ENVELOPING US! WHAT--?

HIGH OVER THE ANDES, A BAND OF **ETERNALS** ARE SIMILARLY SNATCHED...

AND IT MATTERS NOT IF ONE'S POWERS STEM FROM THE SUPERNATURAL, AS DO **SON OF SATAN'S**...

OR FROM SOME DIM, MYTHOLOGICAL PAST, AS IN THE CASE OF THE MIGHTY **THOR!**

ALL WITH EXCEPTIONAL ABILITIES ARE TAKEN! FROM THE HUMBLEST...

LIKE THE AMERICAN INDIAN SUPER HERO **RED WOLF**...

...TO THE FLAMBOYANT ATOMIC SAMURAI OF JAPAN--**SUNFIRE!**

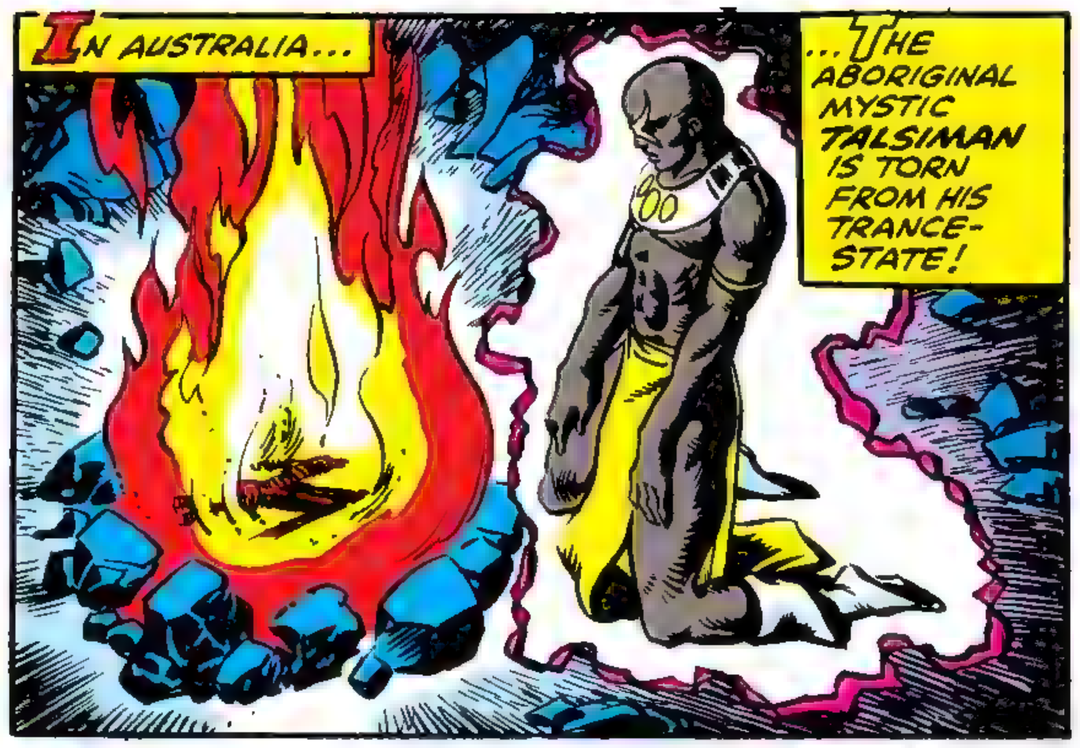
ELSEWHERE, ENGLAND SUDDENLY FINDS ITSELF BEREFT OF THE CRIMSON-COSTUMED **CAPTAIN BRITAIN**...

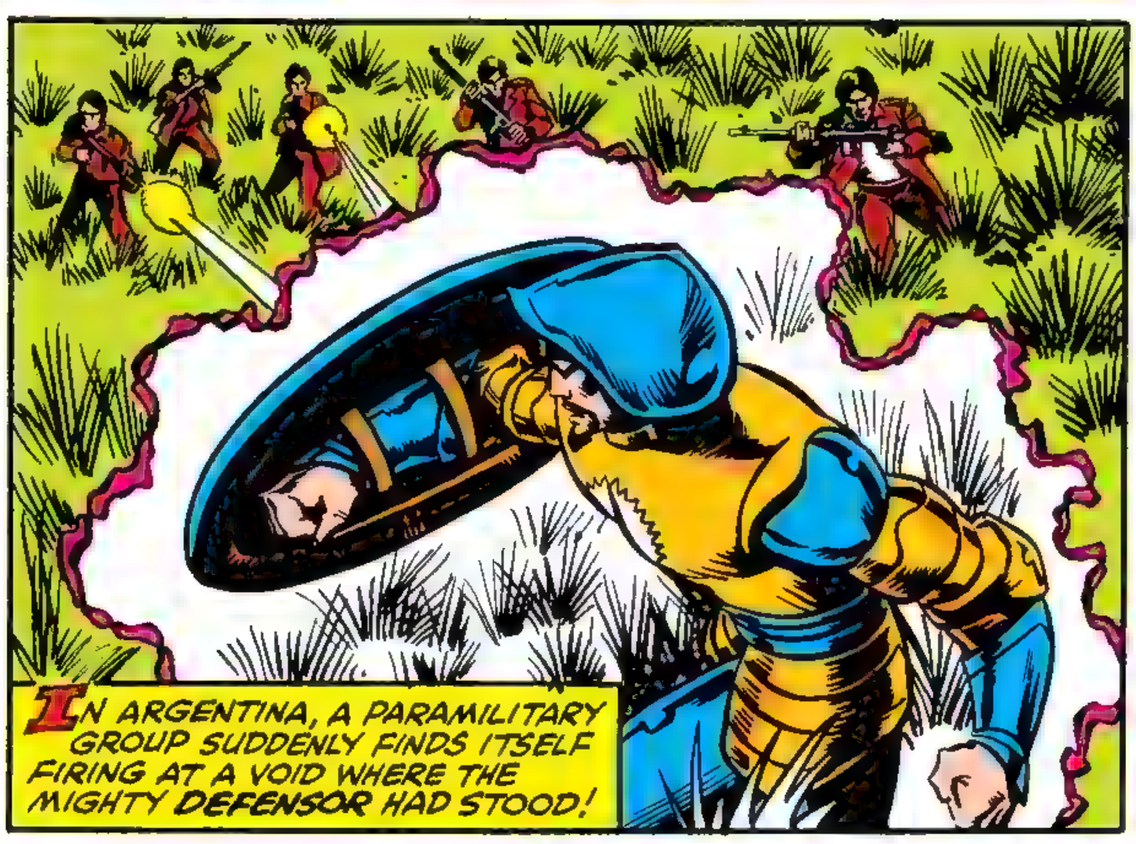
...AND HIS COMPANION, THE **BLACK KNIGHT!**

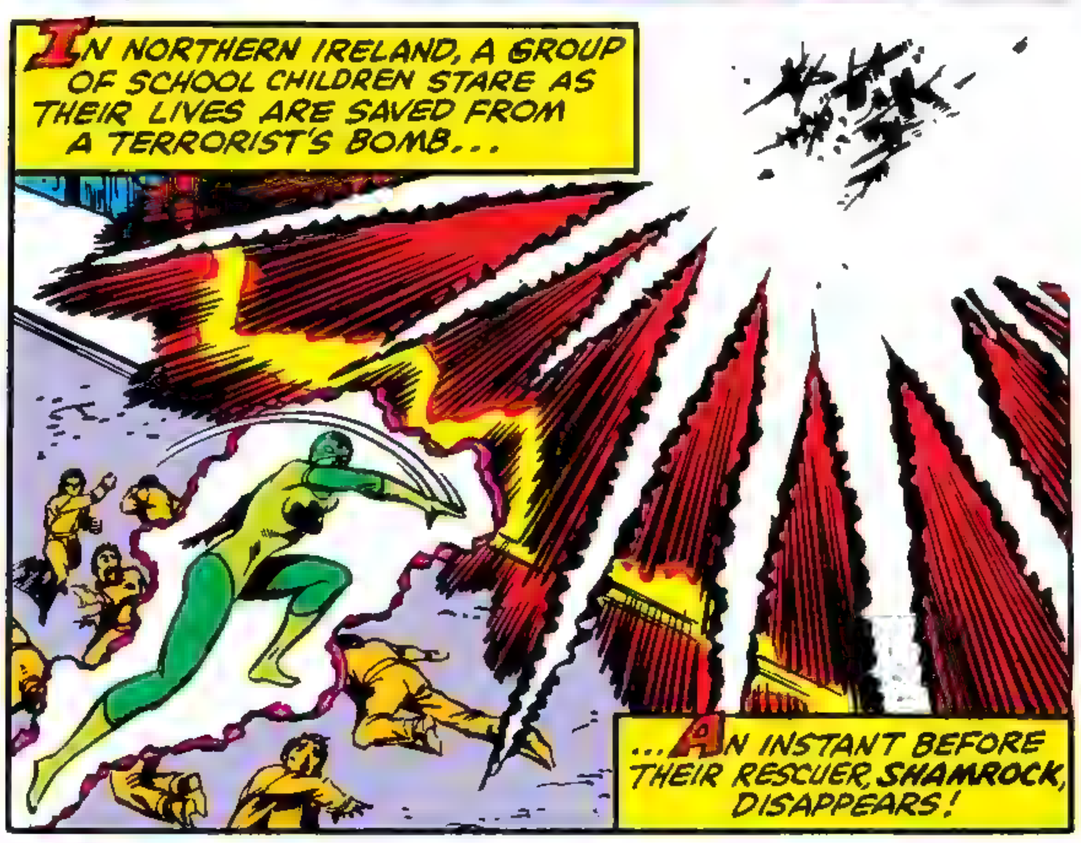
NO SOONER DOES THE ROYAL FAMILY OF THE **INHUMANS** SET FOOT ON THE PLANET OF THEIR BIRTH FOR A VISIT...

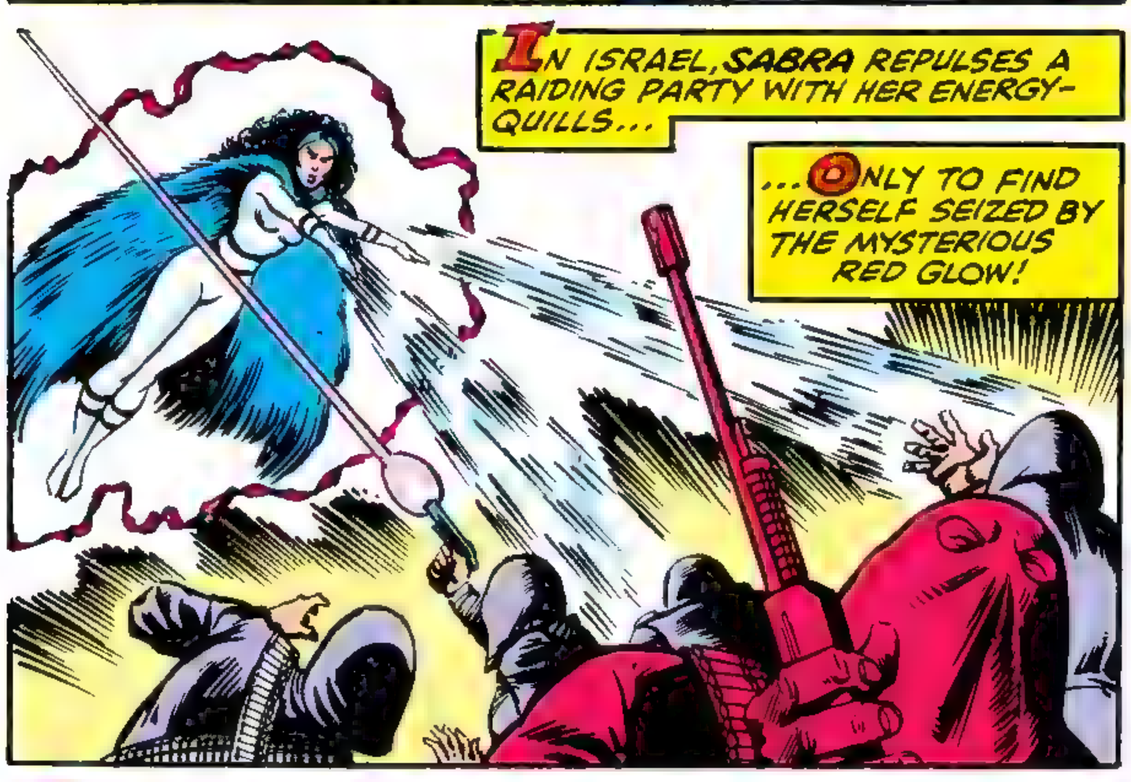
...THAN THEY ARE WHISKED OUT FROM UNDER THEIR DOG'S NOSE!

IN FRANCE...
...THE HIGH-FLYING PEREGRINE DISAPPEARS FROM THE AZURE SKIES!

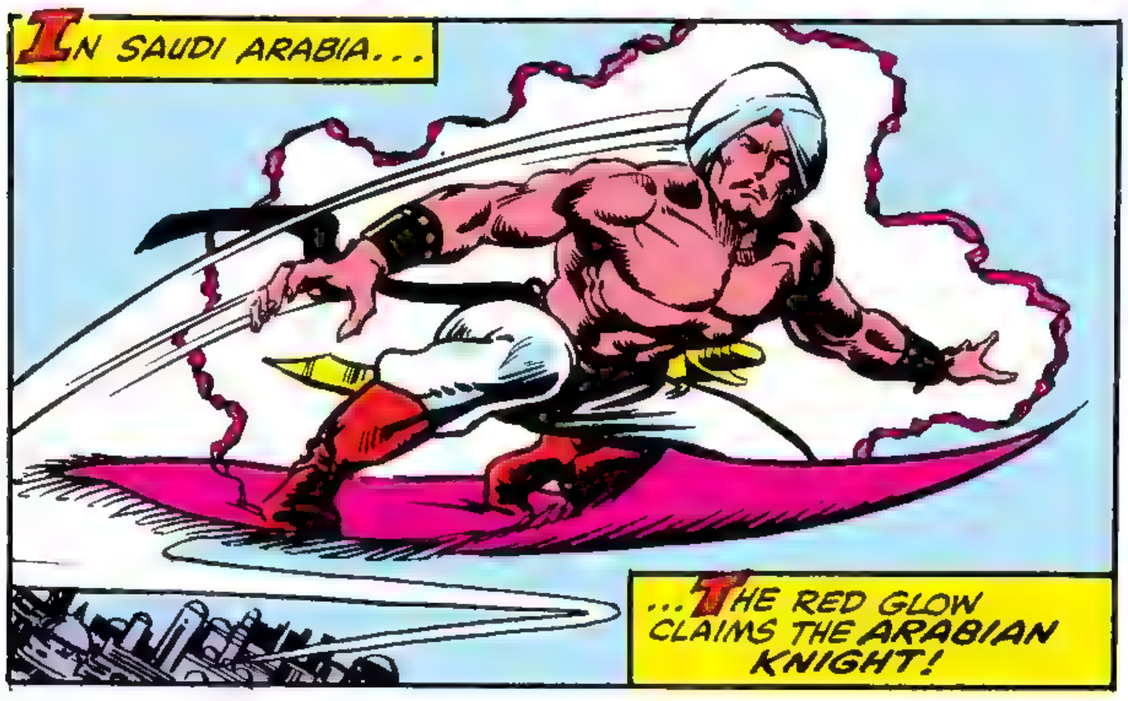

IN AUSTRALIA...
...THE ABORIGINAL MYSTIC TALSIMAN IS TORN FROM HIS TRANCE-STATE!


IN ARGENTINA, A PARAMILITARY GROUP SUDDENLY FINDS ITSELF FIRING AT A VOID WHERE THE MIGHTY DEFENSOR HAD STOOD!


IN NORTHERN IRELAND, A GROUP OF SCHOOL CHILDREN STARE AS THEIR LIVES ARE SAVED FROM A TERRORIST'S BOMB...
...AN INSTANT BEFORE THEIR RESCUER, SHAMROCK, DISAPPEARS!


IN ISRAEL, SABRA REPULSES A RAIDING PARTY WITH HER ENERGY-QUILLS...
...ONLY TO FIND HERSELF SEIZED BY THE MYSTERIOUS RED GLOW!

IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THE HERO WITH THE POWERS OF FIVE GIFTED MEN DRIVES OFF A GANG OF THIEVES...
...AND THEN THE COLLECTIVE MAN HIMSELF DISAPPEARS!


IN SAUDI ARABIA...
...THE RED GLOW CLAIMS THE ARABIAN KNIGHT!

AND, OVER WEST GERMANY...
...IT SPIRITS OFF THE ELECTRIFYING BLITZKRIEG!

THUS IT COMES TO PASS THAT, FOR EACH AND EVERY SUPER-POWERED HERO FROM THE MYRIAD NATIONS OF THE EARTH, THERE IS A MOMENT WHEN TIME ITSELF SEEMS TO STOP AS THEY ARE SNATCHED FROM THEIR ENDEAVORS...TO REAPPEAR HERE, ASSEMBLED IN A VAST ARENA, UTTERING IN A MULTIPLICITY OF LANGUAGES THE SINGLE QUESTION THAT IS IN EVERY MIND!

HEY, WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?

IKARIS! WHAT DOTH TRANSPIRE HERE?

I DO NOT KNOW, FRIEND THOR!

I SENSE A STRANGE FORCE AT WORK HERE, VINDICATOR, ENABLING US ALL TO COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER!

UH-OH! ALPHA FLIGHT! DO YOU GUYS KNOW WHO PULLED THIS STUNT AND SNATCHED US--?

WE'RE AS MYSTIFIED AS YOU, WOLVERINE!

SO, BEAST, YOU ARE ONE OF "EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES"?

AND YOU'RE SASQUATCH, HUH? DO THEY CALL YOU "BIG FOOT" FOR SHORT?

NO...THEY CALL ME "SIR"!

WELL, VANGUARD--CRIMSON DYNAMO! EITHER OF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE WE ARE?

OBVIOUSLY A SPORTING ARENA, IRON MAN!

YOU WEAR THE EMBLEM OF GREAT BRITAIN!

AND YOU, THE GREEN OF IRELAND!

SHAMROCK AND CAPTAIN BRITAIN, DIVIDED BY THEIR COUNTRIES' ENMITY, EYE EACH OTHER SUSPICIOUSLY!

MEANWHILE, TWO WHO HAD ONCE BEEN LOVERS ARE REUNITED.

HELLO, DARKSTAR. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU LEFT THE CHAMPIONS. I LIKE YOUR NEW COSTUME.

THANK YOU, ICEMAN. I'VE THOUGHT OF YOU OFTEN--AND FONDLY--SINCE THEN.

OTHERS IN THE VAST ARENA MEET AND DISCOVER THEY SHARE A COMMON BOND...

MOST HUMANS SHRINK FROM THE IDEA OF AWARENESS IN A MACHINE, VISION. EVEN SUPER-HUMANS.

YES, AMONG MUTANTS, MONSTERS, AND MAN-GODS, WE ARTIFICIAL LIFE-FORMS ARE STILL THE LEAST ACCEPTED.

YOU ARE PETER RASPUTIN, FROM THE UST-ORDYNSKI COLLECTIVE FARM IN SIBERIA!

WHY DO YOU NOT RETURN AND LET YOUR POWERS SERVE THE STATE, COLOSSUS?

PERHAPS I FEEL I CAN BEST SERVE THE MOTHER-LAND BY SERVING THE WORLD...AS AN X-MAN!

CAPTAIN AMERICA, ONE MOMENT I WAS AMONGST MY SUBJECTS IN WAKANDA...

AND THE NEXT FOUND YOU HERE WITH THE REST OF US, PANTHER! WHICH OF OUR ENEMIES HAS THE POWER TO DO THIS?

SO, WE MEET AGAIN, WALL-CRAWLER!

IT MUST BE KISMET, WALL-CRAWLER!

DOCTOR DRUID, I SENSE THAT THIS IS NOT THE WORK OF THE DEVIL!

THE FORCES AT WORK HERE SEEM BEYOND THE MYSTICAL, HELLSTROM!

THE POWER OF MY EBONY BLADE IS MYSTIC IN ORIGIN, ARABIAN KNIGHT!

AS IS MINE, BLACK KNIGHT! WE MUST TEST OUR METTLE SOMEDAY, EH?

WHILE I, DEFENSOR, GO INTO BATTLE BEHIND MY GLEAMING GOLDEN SHIELD!

GREETINGS, NAMOR! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF ALL THIS?

NOTHING AS YET! I SHALL QUERY DR. STRANGE!

IT LOOKS AS IF EVERY HERO ON EARTH IS HERE, BEN!

I HAD NO IDEA THERE WERE SO MANY OF US. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

I DUNNO. SELL "SUPER HERO CONVENTION," T-SHIRTS? HEY, TORCHIE, THIS IS MY OTHER JUNIOR PAL, QUASAR!

PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

HUNH! SUDDENLY HULK FEELS HOT!

MY MYSTIC PERCEPTIONS CAN FIND NO EXPLANATION FOR OUR KIDNAPPING, SUB-MARINER!

MY MENTAL SCANS HAVE DONE NO MORE THAN ASCERTAIN THAT THIS ARENA IS SOMEWHERE IN SPACE, PROFESSOR XAVIER!

IN EARTH ORBIT, TO BE PRECISE! BUT WHO BUILT IT, AND BROUGHT US HERE, IS BEYOND EVEN MY COGNIZANCE, MOONDRAGON.

SOMEBODY BROUGHT US ALL TOGETHER HERE!

BUT WHO?

WHY?

IS HE A FRIEND,... OR A FOE?

FOR WHAT REASON?

WHO CARES??

I JUST WANT OUT OF THIS CAGE!

EASY, WOLVERINE!

WELL, GENTLEMEN, HAS YOUR PONDERING SOLVED THIS PUZZLE?

THERE'S NOTHING TO GO ON, DR. STRANGE!

AND YET, I SENSE A VAST INTELLIGENCE... COMING NEARER!

NOT NEARER, CHARLES XAVIER-- *HERE!*

THE RED GLOW AGAIN!

AND FROM IT, A THOUGHT--

WHAT AWESOME POWER IS THIS AT WORK??

--ENTERING ALL OUR MINDS AT ONCE!

MY POWER, HEROES OF EARTH! THE POWER TO TRANSCEND TIME AND SPACE! THE POWER THAT RAISES THE DEAD AND LAYS LOW THE LIVING! THE POWER OF THE UNIVERSE'S ULTIMATE GAMESMAN...*THE GRANDMASTER!*

WE HAVE ASSEMBLED YOU HEROES HERE AT THIS SITE...

...TO STAGE THE GREATEST TOURNAMENT YOUR WORLD WILL EVER SEE!

A GAME? YOU MEAN YOU BROUGHT US ALL HERE TO PLAY A *GAME*?!?

EXACTLY! AND, AS THE *INERTIA-GLOW* HOLDS YOU PARALYZED BEFORE US...

...SO TOO DOES IT HOLD YOUR WORLD IN THRALL!

BY DRAWING UPON ALL THE POWER OF THE *ELDERS OF THE UNIVERSE* WE HAVE PLACED EVERY LIVING BEING ON YOUR PLANET IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION! IF YOU REFUSE TO PLAY OUR GAME, WE SHALL NOT RELEASE YOUR PLANET! IF YOU DO PLAY, EARTH WILL BE FREED AT GAME'S END!

THE RULES OF THE GAME ARE THESE: FOUR OBJECTS--QUARTERS OF THE GLEAMING GOLDEN GLOBE OF LIFE--WILL BE HIDDEN AT THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH!

MY FACELESS OPPONENT AND I WILL EACH CHOOSE TWELVE CHAMPIONS TO SEEK OUT THE OBJECTS!

WHICHEVER OF US AMASSES THE MOST PIECES, WINS!

...AND IF *I* WIN, I WILL BE GRANTED THE POWER TO RESTORE LIFE TO MY BROTHER, THE *COLLECTOR!*

"LIKE MYSELF, MY BROTHER WAS AN IMMORTAL, ONE OF THE *ELDERS!*

"CURSED WITH THE GIFT OF PROPHECY, HE FORESAW THE COMING OF A GREAT EVIL, AND THUS SET ABOUT COLLECTING THOSE WHOSE SUPER POWERS AND ABILITIES MIGHT OPPOSE THAT DARK DAY!

"BUT THE COLLECTOR WAS DISCOVERED AND SLAIN...

"HIS MURDERER WAS THE MAN-GOD *KORVAC*, WHO UPON ENDING HIS LIFE IN AN ACT OF COSMIC SUICIDE, UNDID VIRTUALLY ALL THE DAMAGE HE HAD DONE UP TO THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH!

"ALL, THAT IS, *EXCEPT* THE RESTORATION OF MY BROTHER!

EVEN I, WHO HOLD THE POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH, CANNOT RESTORE LIFE TO AN *IMMORTAL!*

THUS I SOUGHT OUT THE ENTITY YOU SEE AT MY SIDE! FOR REASONS OF HER OWN, SHE CHOOSES TO REMAIN NAMELESS!

YET THE *UNKNOWN* IS THE ELDEST OF THE ELDERS! IF ANYONE CAN RETURN THE COLLECTOR TO LIFE-- SHE CAN!

SO I HAVE CHALLENGED HER TO THIS *GAME OF CHAMPIONS!*

SHOULD THE GRANDMASTER'S HEROES WIN, THE COLLECTOR WILL BE RESTORED TO LIFE! SHOULD HE LOSE, HE WILL BE STRIPPED OF HIS COSMIC POWERS AND WILL JOIN HIS BROTHER IN OBLIVION.

IN ALL THE UNIVERSE, THE MOST INTERESTING PAWNS ARE HERE... ON EARTH!

HENCE WE CHOSE THIS SPHERE FOR OUR CONTEST AND ASSEMBLED ALL THOSE POSSESSING SUPER-HUMAN POWERS!

SO THAT NEITHER WILL HAVE ANY UNDUE ADVANTAGE OVER THE OTHER, WE HAVE DISQUALIFIED ALL BUT EARTH'S MAIN RACE OF HOMO SAPIENS--

--EXCLUDING FROM THE GAME THOSE IMMORTALS, INHUMANS, ATLANTEANS, ETERNALS, AND ALIENS WHO ALSO OCCUPY THIS WORLD!

THE PLAN AND PURPOSE OF OUR CONTEST IS NOW MADE CLEAR!

LET THE CHOOSING COMMENCE!

THE GRANDMASTER MERELY GESTURES--

--AND THE PARALYZED CAPTAIN AMERICA LEVITATES ABOVE THE TORPID THRONG OF HIS COMPANIONS...

I MAY BE PARALYZED-- BUT AS LONG AS I CAN THINK, I'LL FIND A WAY TO ESCAPE!

YOUR THOUGHTS REVEAL TO ME THE VERY COMBATIVE NATURE I SEEK, MAN OF EARTH!

BUT KNOW: IF YOU REFUSE TO COMPETE, EARTH WILL REMAIN SUSPENDED!

WHEREAS, IF YOU WIN FOR ME, I SWEAR I WILL NEVER USE EARTH-MEN AS PAWNS IN MY GAMES AGAIN!

A GENEROUS OFFER, GRAND-MASTER!

YET MINE IS BETTER! WIN FOR ME, MY CHAMPIONS, AND I WILL EXTEND THE LIFE OF YOUR PLANET'S SUN AN EXTRA MILLION YEARS!

VICTORY, THEN, WOULD VASTLY BENEFIT UNTOLD GENERATIONS UNBORN!

THE UNKNOWN CHOOSES THE SOVIET SUPER HERO... VANGUARD!

AGAIN THE GRANDMASTER EXTENDS A SLENDER FINGER, AND THE AUSTRALIAN MYSTIC TALISMAN RISES INTO THE AIR!

I- I CANNOT ESCAPE-- NOT EVEN BY PHASING INTO DREAM-TIME!

TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE AMERICAN, IRON MAN, AS THE UNKNOWN ADDS TO HER STORE OF PLAYERS!

MY ARMOR'S CIRCUITRY HAS BEEN SHUT DOWN! I CAN'T FIGHT BACK!

AND SO THE SELECTION PROCESS PROCEEDS, CHAMPION BY CHAMPION...
...UNTIL THE GRANDMASTER AND THE UNKNOWN STOP AT TWELVE PLAYERS EACH!

GAZE NOW, YOU TWO-SCORE CHAMPIONS, ON THE *GOLDEN GLOBE* OF *LIFE!*

WATCH AS, WITH BUT A THOUGHT, I DIVIDE ITS GLEAMING WHOLE INTO EQUAL QUARTERS!

AND AGAIN AS, WITH A SECOND THOUGHT, I DISPATCH THESE SHIMMERING SECTIONS TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH!

WHERE YOU MUST FIND AND FIGHT FOR THEIR POSSESSION!

NOW, IN THE WAKE OF THESE GLITTERING PRIZES, WE DISPATCH OUR PLAYERS! THE GAME IS THUS BEGUN!

IN AN HOUR'S TIME THEY WILL RETURN HAVING COMPETED IN OUR CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS, THUS FREEING EARTH FROM THE TIME-LOCK PLACED ABOUT IT...

...OR THEY WILL *FAIL* TO RETURN, IN WHICH CASE THE PEOPLE OF EARTH WILL BE FORFEIT--AND WILL REMAIN IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION *FOR ALL ETERNITY!*

*TO BE CONTINUED!*

# MARVEL SUPER HEROES-1982

**Welcome, one and all, to mighty Marvel's very first *Limited Series*—a special, all-new kind of comic book series designed to run a finite number of issues. *Marvel Limited Series* based on such longtime favorites as HERCULES, WOLVERINE, THE VISION, and HAWKEYE will be rocketing their way to you in the months to come. But, as a very special treat to kick off this new format, we have chosen a project that encompasses *all* of Marvel's stalwart super-stars in a single senses-staggering epic . . . the MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS!**

**The CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS has been a full two years in the making. Originally conceived in the winter of 1979 as a Treasury Edition based on the Summer Olympics, the book was stalled in mid-stream by the United States' withdrawal from the international games in early 1980. Since the basic story did not directly hinge upon the real Olympic games, we could easily eliminate the tie-in. But, between its inception and now, a lot of history has gone down in the mighty Marvel Universe, and the book required quite a bit of revamping so that it accurately reflected the current state of our super heroes.**

**We hope you enjoy this great mass assembly of super-humanity. It will be a long time before you see its like again . . .**

**As a special bonus feature to commemorate this awesome gathering of super-stars, we've compiled—for the first time anywhere—a complete list of every single super hero alive today. We'll be serializing this riotous reference chart over the entire three-issue run of MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS! Buy all three issues for a ringside seat at the super hero event of the decade—and an up-to-the-minute list of the entire Marvel galaxy of super-stars!**

**ACROYEAR**
(Ex-King Acroyear of Spartak) Alien born in the Microversian world of Spartak, possessing super-strength, and wielding an energy sword. Current member of the Micronauts. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1.

**EL ÁGUILA**
(Alejandro Montoya) Spanish mutant with the ability to shoot bio-electric energy when in contact with metal. Carries a sword. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: POWER MAN/IRON FIST #58.

**AJAK**
(Name in own language unknown) Super-human belonging to the sub-species of humanity called the Eternals. Like his fellows, he can levitate. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #2.

**AMERICAN EAGLE**
(Jason Strongbow, tribal leader) American Indian possessing super-strength, endurance, and heightened senses. He carries a crossbow. Current whereabouts: American southwest. First appearance: MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE ANNUAL #6.

**ANGEL**
(Warren Worthington III, wealthy businessman) American mutant with large bird-like wings enabling him to fly. Former member of the X-Men and Champions. Current whereabouts: Los Angeles, California. First appearance: X-MEN #1.

**ANT-MAN**
(Scott Lang, technician) With the aid of a chemical invented by Henry Pym, he is able to shrink to the size of an insect and communicate cybernetically with ants. Current whereabouts: Long Island, New York. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #47.

**AQUARIAN**
(Real name unknown, nicknamed "Wundarr") Alien who possesses a null-field about him capable of neutralizing all forms of energy. (For that reason, he could not be teleported to Grandmaster's game this issue!) Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: FEAR #17. First appearance (as Aquarian): MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #58.

**ARABIAN KNIGHT**
(Abdul -- ,shiek) Arab possessing an enchanted energy scimitar, animated sash, and flying carpet. Current whereabouts: Saudi Arabia. First appearance: HULK #257.

**AURORA**
(Jeanne-Marie Beaubier) Canadian mutant with the ability of running and flying at super-speed. Member of Alpha Flight. Sister of Northstar. Current whereabouts: Canada. First appearance: X-MEN #121.

**BEAST**
(Henry McCoy, biochemist) American mutant with furry-skin and incredible agility and strength. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. Former member of the X-Men and Avengers. First appearance: X-MEN #1. First appearance mutated to current state: AMAZING ADVENTURES #11.

**BLACK BOLT**
(Name in own language unknown) Ruler of the highly-evolved offshoot of humanity called the Inhumans. Possesses the ability to manipulate electrons and harness them to fly. Also has a voice so powerful it can shatter mountains. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #45.

**BLACK KNIGHT**
(Dane Whitman, physicist) American descendant of Arthurian-age champion who wields the ebony blade of his ancestor, and rides a winged horse. Last seen in Twelfth Century Britain, but is known to be back in the present. Current whereabouts: Britain. Former member of the Avengers. First appearance: AVENGERS #48.

**BLACK PANTHER**
(T'Challa, tribal leader of Wakanda) Jungle-born African possessing great natural strength, agility, and heightened senses. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: Africa. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #52.

**BLACK WIDOW**
(Natasha Romanoff, heiress) Russian defector and secret agent possessing great agility and martial skills. Also uses suction-cups to stick to walls and an electric "widow's sting." current whereabouts: America. First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #52.

**BLITZKRIEG**
(Real name unrevealed) West German with the ability to generate electricity and ride lightning-bolts. Current whereabouts: West Germany. First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**BLUE SHIELD**
(Joe Cartinelli, mob leader) American with super-human strength and a force field that protects him from harm. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: DAZZLER #5.

**BROTHER VOODOO**
(Jericho Drumm, physician) Haitian with minor mystical powers including immunity to fire, limited teleportation, and the ability to "possess" other people temporarily using his brother's shade as conduit. Current whereabouts: Haiti. First appearance: STRANGE TALES #169.

**BUG**
(Name in own language unknown) Denizen of the Microversian world of Kalikak with great acrobatic ability and fighting prowess. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1.

**CAPTAIN AMERICA**
(Steve Rogers, artist) Recipient of the Super-Soldier formula endowing him with great strength, agility, and stamina. Carries a shield. Member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: AVENGERS #4.

**CAPTAIN BRITAIN**
(Brian Braddock, physics student) Englishman who inherited an amulet of power, granting him great agility, strength, and stamina. Uses a battle-sceptre. Current whereabouts: London, England. First appearance: MARVEL TEAM-UP #65.

**CAPTAIN ULTRA**
(Real name unrevealed) Would-be hero possessing flight, strength, and other powers but has a vulnerability to fire. Nationality unknown. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #177.

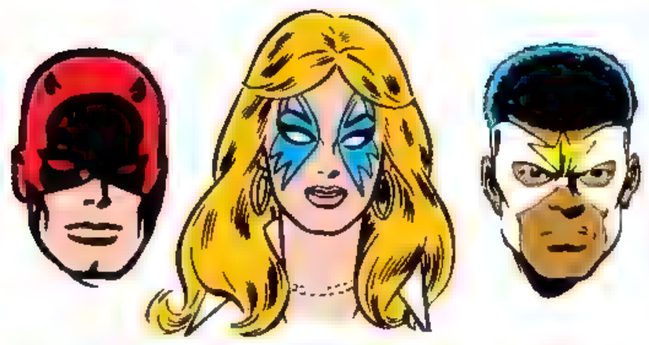
**CAPTAIN UNIVERSE**
(Random recipient of Uni-Power) Uni-Power endows recipient with great strength, flight, and energy-powers. Current possessor: unknown. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #8.

**CLEA**
(No other name known) Sorceress from an alien dimension with minor mystic abilities. Current whereabouts: her home dimension. First appearance; STRANGE TALES #126.

**COLLECTIVE MAN**
(Tao-Yu, government workers) Red Chinese mutant brothers with the ability to merge into one superbeing, can also summon the collective might of their race. Current whereabouts; China. First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**COLOSSUS**
(Peter Rasputin, student) Russian mutant with the ability to transmute his flesh to organic steel. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. Current member of the X-Men. First appearance: GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1.

**COMET**
(Real name unknown) American who possesses the ability to turn the lower half of his body on fire, enabling him to fly. Also shoots energy-blasts from his hands. First active in the 1950's. Current whereabouts; planet Xandar. First appearance: NOVA #22.



**CRIMSON DYNAMO**
(Dimitri Bukharin, government agent) Russian wearing mechanized armor granting strength, near-invulnerability, flight, energy-blasts. Current whereabouts: Moscow, Russia. First appearance: IRON MAN #109.

**CRYSTAL**
(Name in own language unknown) Inhuman with the ability to control the four ancient elements: fire, water, earth and air. Now married to Quicksilver. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #45.

**CYCLOPS**
(Scott Summers) American mutant whose eyes shoot energy-blasts. Brother to Havok. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. Current member of the X-Men. First appearance: X-MEN #1.

**DAREDEVIL**
(Matt Murdock, lawyer) Blind American with heightened senses and incredible agility and fighting prowess. Uses billy club as a weapon. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: DAREDEVIL #1

**DARKSTAR**
(Laynia Petrovna, government agent) Russian mutant with the ability to tap alien form of energy called the darkforce, enabling her to fly and project energy. Sister of Vanguard. Former member of the Champions. Current member of the Soviet Super-Soldiers. Current whereabouts: Moscow, Russia. First appearance: CHAMPIONS #7.

**DAZZLER**
(Alison Blaire, singer) American mutant with the ability to tranform sound into light. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: X-MEN #130

**DEFENSOR**
(Real name unknown) Argentinian hero wielding armor, a sword, and shield, its properties still undetermined. Current whereabouts: Argentina. First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**DEVIL**
(No other name known) Furry animal-like alien from Tropica, a planet of the Microverse. Current member of the Micronauts. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #33.

**DEVIL-SLAYER**
(Eric Simon Payne, ex-marine, ex-hitman) Telepath who uses a transdimensional shadow cloak to teleport and to procure weapons from its pocket-dimensions. Current member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #33.

**DOC SAMSON**
(Leonard Samson, psychiatrist) Gamma-radiated American with super-strength. Current whereabouts: New Mexico. First appearance: HULK #141.

**DOCTOR DRUID**
(Anthony Druid, mysticist) British-born occult master with limited magical powers. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: WEIRD WONDER TALES #19.

**DOCTOR STRANGE**
(Stephen Strange, ex-surgeon) The sorcerer supreme of Earth, commanding the greatest share of Earth's magical energies. Also uses a cloak of levitation and the amulet of Agomotto permitting him to see into persons souls. Current member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: STRANGE TALES #110.

**DRAX THE DESTROYER**
(formerly Art Douglas, real estate agent) Man reborn with powers of flight, strength, and energy-blasts. Father of Moondragon. Current whereabouts: space. First appearance: IRON MAN #55.

**EROS**
(No other name known) Super-human with the power of flight, born of the race of Titans. Son of Mentor. Current whereabouts: Titan, moon of Saturn. First appearance: CAPTAIN MARVEL #27.

**FALCON**
(Sam Wilson, social worker) American who uses an anti-gravitic suit with wings to fly, and has a nigh-telepathic link with his falcon Redwing. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: CAPTAIN AMERICA #117.

**FIREBIRD**
(Bonita Juarez, social worker) American endowed with strange firebird-like energy phenomenon enabling her to fly and generate great amounts of energy. Current member of the Rangers. First appearance: HULK #255.

**FIRELORD**
(Commander Pyreus) Alien born on Xandar who became a herald of Galactus and was given the power of cosmic fire. Current whereabouts: space. First appearance: THOR #225.

**GARGOYLE**
(Isaac Christians, ex-mayor) American turned into a monster by a demon. Flies by means of wings and is able to sap or restore persons' life forces. Current member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: DEFENDERS #94.

**GORGON**
(Name in own language unknown) Inhuman mutated to have hooves instead of feet capable of triggering seismic shock-waves. Brother to Karnak, member of the Royal Family of Inhumans. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #44.

**GUARDSMAN II**
(Michael O'Brien) American possessing armor enabling him to fly and shoot repulsor rays. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: IRON MAN #96.

**HAVOK**
(Alex Summers, archaelogy student) American mutant whose body generates cosmic energy that can be siphoned off into explosions. Brother of Cyclops. Occasional member of the X-Men. Current whereabouts: Rio Diablo, New Mexico. First appearance: X-MEN #58.

**HAWKEYE**
(Clint Barton, security chief) American who has mastered the art of archery and uses various trick arrows. Occasional member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #57.

**HELLCAT**
(Patsy Walker) American with fantastic acrobatic abilities, agility, and battle prowess. Former member of the Avengers, current member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: AVENGERS #144.

**HER**
(Formerly called "Paragon") Artificial human being created to be "perfect," capable of flying and generating cosmic energy to rearrange molecules. Current whereabouts: off Earth. First appearance (as Paragon): HULK ANNUAL #6. First appearance (as Her): MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #61.

**HERCULES**
(Uses no regular alias) Olympian born man-god possessing super-strength. Son of Zeus. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: Hollywood, California. First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #1.

**HERO**
(Real name unknown) Earth-born Eternal with super-strength. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: ETERNALS #13.

**HULK**
(Robert Bruce Banner, physicist) Gamma-radiated American possessing super-strength which increases in geometric proportion to anger. Former member of the Avengers, occasional member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New Mexico. First appearance: HULK #1.

**HUMAN TORCH**
(Johnny Storm, adventurer) American affected by cosmic rays, now able to turn his body into living flame. He can fly and create objects out of his own excess fire. Member of the Fantastic Four. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

**HUMAN TORCH II**
(Frankie Raye) American who is able to simulate many of John Storm's powers. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #238.

**ICEMAN**
(Bob Drake, student) American mutant able to convert his skin to ice. He is able to control coldness and create frozen objects out of any moisture. Former member of the X-Men and Champions. Current whereabouts: upstate New York. First appearance: X-MEN #1.

**IKARIS**
(Ike Harris, archaeologist) Earth-born Eternal possessing the abilities of levitation, super-strength, and optic energy-beams. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #1.

**INVISIBLE GIRL**
(Susan Storm Richards, adventurer) American affected by cosmic rays, possessing the ability to turn invisible and create invisible force fields. Current member of the Fantastic Four. Wife of Mister Fantastic. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

**IRON FIST**
(Daniel Rand, investigator/bodyguard) American-born trained in the martial arts in the dimensional city of K'un-Lun, master of the "iron fist" technique. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: MARVE PREMIERE #15.

**IRON MAN**
(Anthony Stark, industrialist) American clad in highly-technological, solar-powered armor, enabling him to fly, shoot repulsor rays, and other feats. Current member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #40.

**JACK OF HEARTS**
(Jack Hart, student) American endowed with strange energy, enabling him to fly and shoot energy rays, and computer-analyze machinery at a glance. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #22.

**JOCASTA**
(No regular alias) A robot built by Ultron, possessing various cybernetic and super-humanoid abilities. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: AVENGERS #162.

**KARNAK**
(Name in own language unknown) Inhuman possessing the zen-like ability to perceive stress points in all objects, has trained himself to be a master of karate. Brother to Gorgon, member of the Royal Family. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #45.

***TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!***

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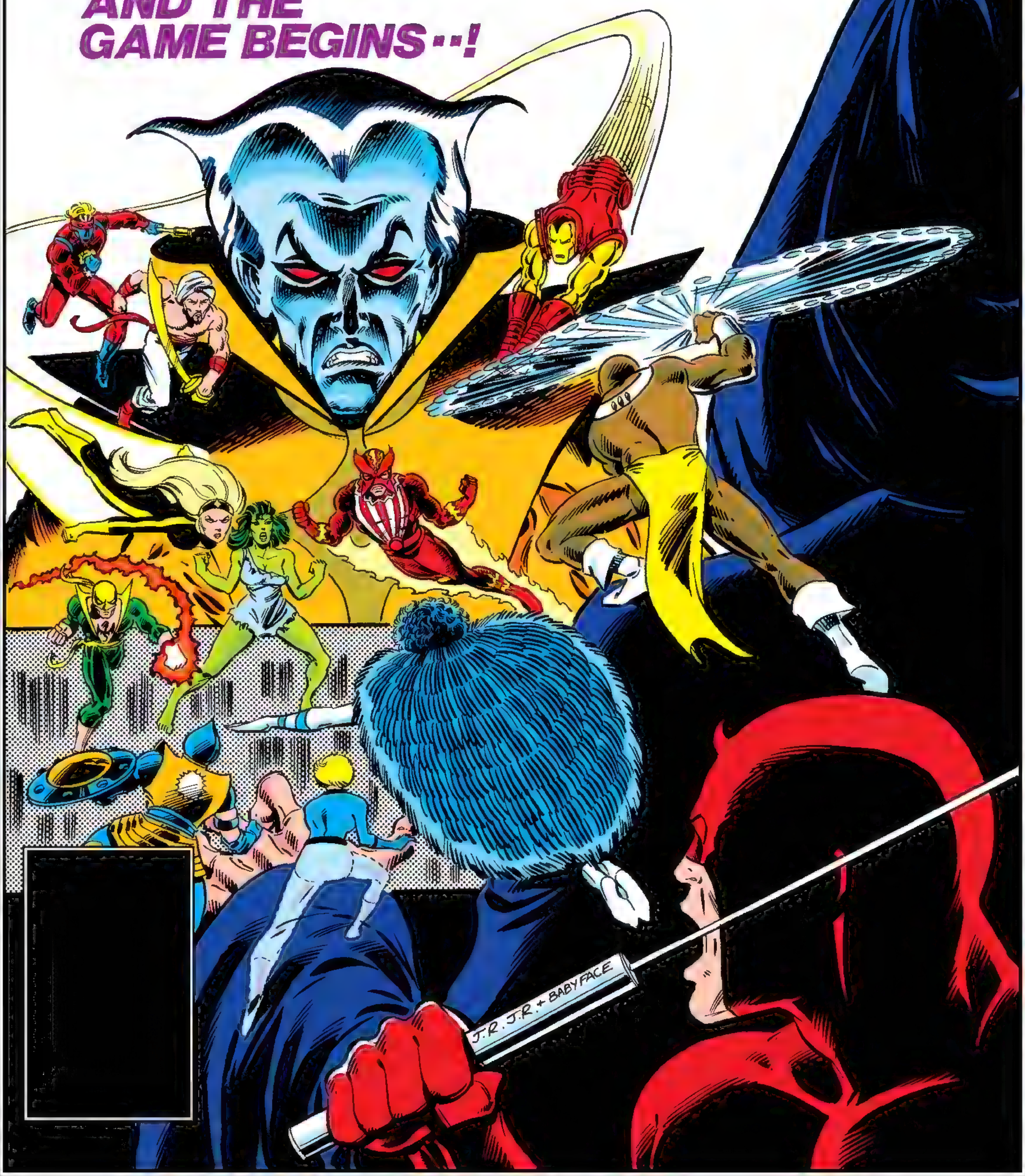
# MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS™

## AND THE GAME BEGINS··!



Stan Lee PRESENTS:

# MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS!

IT BEGINS WITH THE MASS DISAPPEARANCE OF EVERY LIVING SUPER HERO ON EARTH--!

INEXPLICABLY, THEY ALL MATERIALIZE WITHIN AN EARTH-ORBITING ATHLETIC STADIUM THAT HAD NOT EXISTED TILL MERE MOMENTS BEFORE!

THEIR ABDUCTORS ARE THE GALACTIC GAMESMAN KNOWN AS **THE GRANDMASTER**, AND A MYSTERIOUS ENTITY CALLED **THE UNKNOWN!**

TWENTY-FOUR OF THE MIGHTIEST HEROES ARE CHOSEN FOR A CONTEST-- TO COMPETE FOR THE FOUR PIECES OF THE **GOLDEN GLOBE OF LIFE**, HIDDEN AT THE FAR CORNERS OF THE EARTH!

IF THE GRANDMASTER'S TEAM WINS, THE UNKNOWN WILL RESTORE HIS DEAD BROTHER TO LIFE! IF IT LOSES, THE GAMESMAN WILL JOIN HIS BROTHER IN OBLIVION!

WITH ALL LIFE ON EARTH HELD HOSTAGE IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION, THE TWELVE CHOSEN PAWNS DISAPPEAR FROM THE ORBITTING ARENA, AND THE GREATEST COMPETITION OF ALL BEGINS...

CHAPTER 2

# FIRST CONTEST: FRENZY IN THE FROZEN NORTH!

BY THE ETERNAL NUMBA-KULLA!

WE'RE NO LONGER IN THE SPACE ARENA! BUT WHERE...?!

THE TEMPERATURE'S FAR BELOW FREEZING!

EVEN THE ATOMIC ENERGY THAT COURSES THROUGH MY BEING MAY NOT PROTECT ME FROM THIS BITTER COLD.

YOU'LL PROBABLY BE THE *LAST* OF US TO GO, SUNFIRE!

THE UNKNOWN SAID WE'D BE SENT TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH-- THIS MUST BE THE NORTH POLE! BUT WHY US? NONE OF OUR POWERS SEEM SUITED TO THIS TERRAIN!

THE GRANDMASTER'S TEAM:
TALISMAN
DAREDEVIL
DARKSTAR

THE UNKNOWN'S TEAM:
SUNFIRE
INVISIBLE GIRL
IRON FIST

STORY: MARK GRUENWALD, BILL MANTLO, STEVEN GRANT
SCRIPT: BILL MANTLO PENCILS: JOHN ROMITA, JR.
INKS: PABLO MARCOS LETTERS: JOE ROSEN
COLORS: MICHELE WOLFMAN, CHRISTIE SCHEELE
EDITORS: MARK GRUENWALD, TOM DEFALCO
EDITOR-IN CHIEF: JIM SHOOTER

PERHAPS THAT IS A FURTHER INCENTIVE TO OUR COMPETING FOR THE PRIZE! THE SOONER WE CLAIM IT--THE SOONER WE SAVE OURSELVES!

THAT MAKES SENSE--SORT OF!

IT MUST BE SOMEWHERE NEARBY! LET'S COMBINE OUR POWERS TO SEARCH FOR IT!

NO! THE GRAND-MASTER SAID WE MUST COMPETE--OR EARTH WILL REMAIN IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION!

AND IT WILL BE SUNFIRE ALONE WHO SHALL KNOW THE HONOR OF VICTORY THIS DAY!

HOTHEAD!

BUT I'VE STILL GOT ONE OTHER TEAMMATE!

YOU'RE THE INVISIBLE GIRL OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, AREN'T YOU?

I'M DANNY RAND, BETTER KNOWN AS IRON FIST!

I HAVE HEARD OF YOUR MARTIAL ARTS PROWESS, MR. RAND. I WONDER IF EVERYONE'S BEEN THROWN TOGETHER WITH HEROES THEY'VE NEVER WORKED WITH--

--OR IF THE SELECTION PROCESS WAS RANDOM?

I DON'T KNOW, MRS. RICHARDS.

CALL ME SUE...

LET'S HOPE YOU DON'T HAVE TO CALL ME *DEAD* BEFORE WE FIND THE PRIZE--

--OR BEFORE THE OTHER TEAM BEATS US TO IT!

SPEAKING OF THE OTHER TEAM...

YOU ARE THE AMERICAN CRIMEFIGHTER *DAREDEVIL*, NO? I REMEMBER HEARING OF YOU DURING MY SHORT STAY IN THE UNITED STATES.

I AM *DARKSTAR*, OF THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS.

MY RADAR-SENSES REVEAL A YOUNG WOMAN OF INCREDIBLE POWER!

I RECALL A, UMM, LADYFRIEND OF MINE SPEAKING ABOUT YOU, DARKSTAR.

HER NAME IS NATASHA ROMANOV.

THE BLACK WIDOW? THOUGH A DEFECTOR, HER NAME IS SECRETLY HONORED IN THE U.S.S.R.!

AND YOU WHO ARE OUR THIRD TEAM-MATE-- HAVE YOU A NAME?

TO GIVE ONE'S NAME IS TO RISK ONE'S SOUL, YOUNG WOMAN. BUT I MAY BE CALLED *TALISMAN*, FROM AMONG THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA.

I AM A SHAMAN, OF SORTS-- ONE WHO COMMUNES WITH THE *ALTJERINGA*-- THE DREAM-TIME.

COMRADES, LOOK-- ONE OF OUR OPPONENTS TAKING OFF!

I HAD BETTER COVER HIM-- UNLESS EITHER OF YOU TWO CAN FLY...

SHE'S GONE!

NOW HOW DO I TELL TALISMAN THAT I WORK BETTER ALONE, SINCE ALLIES ONLY CONFUSE MY RADAR-SENSES?

DAREDEVIL--

I CAN'T SEE-- BUT I CAN SENSE SUNFIRE'S FIERY PASSAGE!

NOT I.

WE'RE LAND-BOUND, DARKSTAR! YOU GO AHEAD!

--I POSSESS CERTAIN... SENSES... THAT FUNCTION BEST IN SOLITUDE. IF I MAY SEARCH FOR THE PRIZE IN MY OWN WAY...?

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW!

CERTAINLY, TALISMAN!

MAYBE WE'LL, ER, *SEE* EACH OTHER AT THE FINISH?

THUS, A SHORT TIME LATER...

A SILVER-TRESSED SUPER HEROINE FLYING TOWARDS ME?

IF SHE AND HER TEAMMATES CAN BE OVERPOWERED FIRST--

--THEN ONLY SUNFIRE'S TEAM WILL REMAIN TO CLAIM THE PRIZE!

LENIN'S GHOST! TWIN SPEARS OF FLAME ARCING PAST ME!

MY ORIENTAL OPPONENT OUGHT NOT TO PROVOKE--

--ONE WHO CAN RETALIATE BY SUMMONING...THE *DARKFORCE!*

BY THE SACRED SUN OF JAPAN!

A GIANT HAND OF EBONY ENERGY REACHING TO ENGULF ME!!

MEANWHILE, FAR BELOW...

IRON FIST, LOOK! THAT'S DAREDEVIL!

MAYBE WE OUGHT TO KEEP HIM COVERED-- IN CASE HE FINDS THE PRIZE.

NO! THE FIRST BLOW'S ALREADY BEEN STRUCK OVERHEAD!

IF WE'RE GOING TO BEAT THE GRAND-MASTER'S PLAYERS--

--WE'D BETTER JOIN THE FRAY... FAST!

THIS IS SO UNLIKE WORKING WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

WITH REED, BEN, AND JOHNNY, I FUNCTION AS PART OF A TEAM! HERE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE ALL SHARE THE SAME GOAL--

--EVERYONE'S ACTING ON HIS OR HER OWN!

WELL, IF THAT'S THE GAME, I'LL PLAY MY PART--

--STARTING WITH CROSSING THE ICE TO TAKE OUT OUR STRANGELY-SEATED OPPONENT!

I'LL HAVE WON BEFORE HE EVEN KNOWS WHAT'S... *FOOTPRINTS?!*

OF COURSE! BEING INVISIBLE DOESN'T MAKE ME IMMATERIAL!

WALKING ON FORCE-FIELD SNOWSHOES SHOULD SOLVE THAT PROBLEM--

--BY EVENLY DISTRIBUTING MY WEIGHT SO I DON'T MAR THE SNOW!

*A GOOD TACTIC, IF HER OPPONENT RELIES UPON OPTICAL SIGHT!*

*BUT TALISMAN "SEES" IN DREAM-TIME, A MYTH-REALM OF THE ETERNAL PAST ADJACENT TO REAL-TIME.*

WHILE MY PHYSICAL FORM SITS IN A TRANCE-LIKE STATE, MY DREAM FORM SEARCHES FOR THE GOLDEN PRIZE!

BUT NOW I SENSE AN OPPONENT'S APPROACH!

I MUST RETURN FROM DREAM-TIME--

--FOR I CANNOT LEAVE MY BODY UNPROTECTED!

WHAT? S-SUDDENLY YOU RISE UP--AWAKE?!

WHAT WONDERMENT IS THIS?

A DISEMBODIED VOICE SPEAKING FROM THE AIR!

BUT WHAT CANNOT BE SEEN WITH NORMAL SIGHT--

WHRR KRRRR

--MAY STILL BE OVERWHELMED BY THE SENSES-STAGGERING SONG OF *TJURUNGA*, MY WHIRLING ***BULL-ROARER!***

ROOOOOOOO

DESPITE MY INVISIBILITY, TALISMAN SENSES MY PRESENCE--

--AND HIS WHIRLING WEAPON SEEMS TO BE DISTORTING THINGS... WARPING MY PERCEPTIONS!

*IT IS, IN SHORT, PLUNGING ALL WITHIN SOUND OF THE BULL-ROARER INTO DREAM-TIME!*

*ELSEWHERE ACROSS THE ICE...*

IT'S HARD TO CONCENTRATE MY RADAR-SENSES--

--WHAT WITH THE DRIVING SNOW AND THE SOUND OF MY CHATTERING TEETH... BUT I'D BETTER PAY ATTENTION! THE HEARTBEAT I'M HEARING--

--IS THAT OF A FIGHTER!

DAREDEVIL, I AM IRON FIST!

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE OPPONENTS, FIST.

WE WERE CHOSEN TO FIGHT! YOU FOR THE GRANDMASTER, AND I FOR THE UNKNOWN!

I MUST ADMIT THE THOUGHT OF SPARRING WITH A FIGHTER LIKE DAREDEVIL INTRIGUES ME!

SHALL WE BEGIN?

HE CAN'T REALLY BE *BOWING* TO ME-- CAN HE?

MAYBE I CAN END THIS BEFORE ANYONE GETS HURT!

MY BOW WAS A MARTIAL ARTS COURTESY, DAREDEVIL--

--NOT A SIGN THAT I WASN'T READY!

THIS IS RIDICULOUS! HAVING IRON FIST AROUND IS JUST JAMMING MY RADAR-SENSES--

--KEEPING ME FROM FINDING THE PRIZE!

BUT, SINCE I'D HAVE TO FIGHT HIM OFF IF I FOUND IT ANYWAY--

SPLAT!

--I MIGHT AS WELL GET THE SLUGGING OVER WITH NOW!

CAN'T SEE!

THAT MAKES US EVEN!

BUT THE ACCIDENT THAT ROBBED ME OF MY SIGHT--

--SOMEHOW HEIGHTENED ALL MY REMAINING SENSES-- WHETHER THAT IS ENOUGH OF AN ADVANTAGE AGAINST HIS KUNG FU MASTERY REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

MEANWHILE, IN THE SKY ABOVE...

THE WOMAN'S ENERGY-HAND PINS MY OWN HANDS TO MY SIDE!

THERE IS NO USE STRUGGLING, MY FRIEND!

THE DARKFORCE NEUTRALIZES ALL LIGHT ENERGIES-- DISPATCHING THEM INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION!

BLOOD OF MY ANCESTORS-- I AM A SAMURAI!

I WILL NOT BE BESTED BY A MERE WOMAN!!

OHHH! THE STRAIN-- TOO GREAT!

SUMMONING EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY, SUNFIRE FORCES THE ATOMIC FIRES THAT RAGE WITHIN HIM TO ERUPT THROUGH ALL HIS EXPOSED EXTREMITIES AT ONCE!

SO FIERCE IS THE ENSUING EXPLOSION THAT IT SHATTERS THE ICE FIELDS BELOW--

--AS WELL AS FREEING THE ATOMIC MUTANT!

IF THE DARKFORCE CANNOT CONTAIN MY OPPONENT'S POWER--

--IT CAN STILL PREVENT THAT POWER FROM HARMING ME!

BUT THIS BACK-AND-FORTH BATTLE BRINGS NEITHER HERO CLOSE TO THE PRIZE!

BELOW... MY BULL-ROARER HAS TOTALLY DISORIENTED MY OPPONENT--ARRESTING HER PROGRESS!

C-CAN'T CONCENTRATE! I-IF ONLY I COULD FIND SOMETHING IN THIS SHIFTING REALITY TO HOLD ON TO!

WAIT! THE ICE-- CRACKING BENEATH ME! IS IT ANOTHER ILLUSION OF "DREAM-TIME," OR...

NO! SOMEHOW IT FEELS REAL!

A-AND IF I CAN JUST FIND ONE FOCAL POINT IN THIS WHIRLING INSANITY--

--I CAN CREATE A FORCE-FIELD TO BLOCK OUT TALISMAN'S ATTACK!

THE WOMAN RESISTS THE CALL OF THE GREAT BEYOND! SHE TOO MUST TRAFFIC WITH THE UNSEEN.

EH? THE ICE-- CRACKING BENEATH ME!

I COULD NOT SURVIVE A PLUNGE INTO THE FREEZING WATERS BELOW!

THE PSYCHEDELICS HAVE STOPPED!

TALISMAN'S FLEEING-- BUT MY INVISIBLE FORCE-SPHERE WILL KEEP ME AFLOAT AND DRY!

ELSEWHERE ON THE ICE...

THIS FIGHT IS SENSELESS!

I'VE GOT TO END IT IT BEFORE THE FREEZING COLD KILLS US BOTH!

YOU FIGHT LIKE A HEAVYWEIGHT BOXER, DAREDEVIL!

AS THE SON OF "BATTLING MURDOCK," I GUESS THAT'S ONLY NATURAL! *UNNGHH!*

GODS OF K'UN-LUN! WHAT--?!

KRAAK

S-SOUND OF THE ICE SHATTERING ALMOST DEAFENED ME!

IRON FIST IS STUNNED!

WAIT! THE RUMBLING IS SUBSIDING AS THE ICE SETTLES-- AND MY RADAR-SENSES ARE DETECTING...

...THE *PRIZE!* IT HAS TO BE!!

WELL, DD-- WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

DAREDEVIL RUNNING OFF! WHY? DID I DEFEAT HIM--

--OR HAS HE STUMBLED ONTO SOMETHING??

*AND, A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...*

SUNFIRE'S FLARE-UP HAS MELTED THE ICE SHEET!

AS IF FINDING THE PRIZE WEREN'T HARD ENOUGH!

WAIT! WHAT'S THAT GLOWING OBJECT FLOATING IN THE WATER?

THE PRIZE-- IT MUST BE-- AND DAREDEVIL'S SEEN IT TOO!

*NOT "SEEN," BUT "SENSED"!*

THE PRIZE IS EMITTING AN ULTRASONIC PULSE--

--WHICH SHOULD ENABLE ME TO KEEP A FIX ON IT EVEN WITH MY RADAR-SENSES DEADENED BY THE ICY WATER!

WOMAN, LOOK BELOW US!

YOUR TEAMMATE AND MINE APPROACH THE GOLDEN PRIZE!

BUT THE TEAM THAT CLAIMS IT MUST BE MINE!

NO! SUNFIRE AND THE INVISIBLE GIRL ARE PAWNS OF THE UNKNOWN! I MUST STOP THEM--

--THUS AIDING MY TEAMMATE, DAREDEVIL!

ENERGY PINCERS-- GRABBING AT ME!

MUST EXTEND MY FORCE FIELD TO WARD THEM OFF!

ALL WARRIORS CONVERGE UPON THE PRIZE! TO AID MY TEAM--

--I MUST ONCE AGAIN USE MY SACRED WEAPON!

SUDDENLY EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING INTO SLOW MOTION!

AM I GOING CRAZY--

--OR HAS THE WORLD ITSELF GONE MAD?!

TALISMAN'S DREAM-TIME AGAIN-- BUT THIS TIME I'M READY FOR IT! GOT TO KEEP GOING!

WHAT'S GOING ON? ONE MINUTE I "SEE" MY GOAL CLEARLY--

--AND THE NEXT IT'S LOST IN A SWIRLING MIASMATIC NIGHTMARE!

THE DREAM-TIME IS CONFUSING FRIEND AS WELL AS FOE!

IT IS UP TO ME TO SEIZE THE PRIZE.

GOT TO...CONCENTRATE! SCREEN OUT WHAT'S NOT REAL--

--AND FOCUS ON THE *PRIZE!!*

I'M BUT TWO FEET FROM IT. I CAN-- WHAT? A CABLE FROM DD'S BILLY CLUB!

*AND, WITH THE GLEAMING GOLDEN QUARTER OF THE **GLOBE OF LIFE** SECURE IN DAREDEVIL'S GRASP--*

*--THE TWO TEAMS VANISH FROM THE FROZEN ARCTIC WASTES!*

*THE FIRST CONTEST THUS GOES TO THE **GRANDMASTER!***

CHAPTER 3

SECOND CONTEST: GHOST TOWN SHOWDOWN!

THE UNKNOWN'S TEAM: IRON MAN ARABIAN KNIGHT SABRA

WHERE IN THE NAME OF ALLAH HAS THE UNKNOWN TRANSPORTED US TO?!

WELL, IT'S EITHER THE HOLLYWOOD SET OF "HIGH NOON"--

--OR AN HONEST-TO-GOODNESS WESTERN GHOST TOWN!

OUR OPPONENTS ARE MATERIAL-IZING ACROSS THE STREET!

SOMEWHERE IN THIS HOVEL IS HIDDEN THE PRIZE WE MUST SEEK!

THE GRANDMASTER'S LINED US UP FACING IRON MAN'S TEAM AS IF THIS WERE GOING TO BE A SHOOTOUT AT THE O.K. CORRAL!

THE GRANDMASTER'S TEAM: DEFENSOR SHE-HULK CAPTAIN BRITAIN

YES, ONE QUARTER OF THE GOLDEN GLOBE OF LIFE--BUT IT COULD BE ANY-WHERE!

I'M *IRON MAN*, OF THE UNITED STATES--AN AVENGER!

AND I'M *SABRA*, OF ISRAEL!

LIKE THE SPINY PEAR THAT IS THE SYMBOL OF THE ISRAELI PEOPLE FROM WHICH I DERIVE MY NAME--

--I AM HARSH TO MY ENEMIES... YET SWEET TO MY FRIENDS!

BAH! WHATEVER HER POWERS, THE *ARABIAN KNIGHT* WILL NOT FIGHT ALONGSIDE A JEWESS!

IS IT HER NATIONALITY--OR THE FACT THAT SABRA'S A WOMAN THAT'S BOTHER-ING YOU, KNIGHT?

HOW CAN WE HOPE TO GAIN THE PRIZE WHEN WE'RE FIGHTING BOTH THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT--

--AND THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES AT THE SAME TIME?

OLD ENMITIES ARE NOT EASILY SET ASIDE, IRON MAN!

I AGREE!

AND, SINCE SABRA HAS GONE TO SEEK THE PRIZE HER WAY--THEN TOO SHALL I SEEK IT IN MINE!

A FLYING CARPET??

I GUESS THAT LEAVES ME ON MY OWN!

THANK HEAVENS FOR SMALL FAVORS!

MEANWHILE...

SEÑORITA, I AM GABRIEL CARLOS DANTES SEPULVEDA, OF BRAZIL, AT YOUR SERVICE.

YOU MAY CALL ME... DEFENSOR!

I WAS HOPING YOU HAD A NICK-NAME.

I'M SHE-HULK...

IN CASE MY COSTUME DOESN'T SPEAK FOR ITSELF--

--I'M CAPTAIN BRITAIN!

DO WE SEARCH FOR THE PRIZE AS A TEAM-- OR SOLO?

I WOULD BE PROUD TO SAFEGUARD THE LOVELY SEÑORITA...

DON'T BOTHER, DON JUAN!

¿QUE DICE--? =COFF COFF=

LOOKS LIKE IT'S SOLO, THEN--

-- WHICH IS HOW CAPTAIN BRITAIN WORKS BEST!

¡MADRE DE DIOS! HOW HOT-TEMPERED THESE ANGLOS ARE!

BOTH TEAMS ARE NOW IN MOTION!

SPEAKING OF WHICH...!

A WOMAN OF THE OPPOSING TEAM LEAPING TOWARDS ME?! SHE WILL EASILY BE STOP--!

YOU JUST SAID THE WRONG THING, TURBAN-TOP!

NOBODY STOPS *SHE-HULK*-- EASILY OR OTHERWISE!

THAT'S A LESSON YOU WOULD-BE SUPER-*MEN* HAD BETTER LEARN!

WHUNFF!

OKAY, ENOUGH EGO-MASSAGE! THERE'S A COMBATANT OF MY OWN GENDER FLYING JUST AHEAD!

SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MUCH!

DEFENSOR'S SOUTH-OF-THE-BORDER MACHISMO REALLY GOT MY BLOOD BOILING! I COULD MOP UP THE FLOOR WITH MALE CHAUVINIST PIGS LIKE HIM!

BUT, IN JUDGING THE ISRAELI SUPER HEROINE TOO SOON, **SHE-HULK** MAY BE GUILTY OF A LITTLE REVERSE-BIAS HERSELF...

I AM UNDER ATTACK!

THE SPINES OF SABRA WILL STOP HER!

ENERGY QUILLS LEAP FROM SABRA'S GLEAMING BRACELETS --

--PARALYZING WHICHEVER PARTS OF THE BODY THEY STRIKE!

G-GOING NUMB ALL OVER--

--WHICH MORE THAN MAKES THIS ISRAELI AMAZON A MATCH FOR ME!

I HAD HEARD YOU WERE POWERFUL, SHE-HULK!

BUT WHAT SABRA LACKS IN PHYSICAL STRENGTH--

--SHE MAKES UP FOR IN SKILL!

BELOW...

THE DUST IN HERE HASN'T BEEN DISTURBED FOR YEARS! EVERYTHING'S AS DRY AND BRITTLE AS--

--MATCHSTICKS!?

STAND YOUR GROUND, ENEMIGO!

WHO IN BLAZES--??

THE GOLDEN PRIZE MUST BE DEFENSOR'S!

THE GRAND-MASTER'S, YOU MEAN!

WE'RE ALL PAWNS AROUND HERE!

BUT, SINCE WE'RE DUTY-BOUND TO FIGHT, I'LL MAKE THIS AS PAINLESS AS--

--POSSIBLE!!

HIS SHIELD REPELLED MY REPULSOR RAYS!

AND HURLED THEM RIGHT BACK AT YOU, SEÑOR!

A NICE GIMMICK, DON QUIXOTE--

--BUT GIMMICKS DON'T WASH WHEN YOU'RE UP AGAINST THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN!

AND SO BEGINS A BARROOM BRAWL--SUPER HERO STYLE!

MEANWHILE, HIGH IN THE AIR...

EH? A RED-GARBED ATTACKER, LEAPING AT ME--??

MIND IF I JOIN YOU? IT'S HARD TO SCOUR THE AREA HOPPING FROM ROOF TO ROOF!

AT MY COMMAND, THIS CARPET WOULD HURL YOU TO YOUR DOOM!

BUT I'D RATHER PIT MY SCIMITAR AGAINST YOUR STAFF.

THE STAR-SCEPTRE IS NO MERE STAFF, ARAB!

--THOUGH ONE IS ABOUT TO END!

THE EFFECT OF YOUR PARALYZING QUILLS IS WEARING OFF, SABRA!

OOPS!

I- I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT HER THAT HARD!

STRAK!

WE ARE WELL-MATCHED THEN-- FOR MY ENERGY SCIMITAR IS NO MERE SWORD!

NOW LET'S SEE HOW QUICKLY YOU RECOVER FROM... *THIS!!*

KPOW!

UNNGHH!

THE ISRAELI!

THE SKY PLAYS HOST TO TWO DEADLY DUELS--

RUNNING FROM OUR FIGHT, BRITISHER?

NO, BUT YOUR CARPET WAS ABOUT TO BECOME TOO CROWDED FOR COMFORT!

S-SOMETHING CUSHIONING MY FALL!?!

THE ARABIAN KNIGHT'S FLYING CARPET!?

I TRUST YOU HAVE LANDED SAFELY, ISRAELI?

YOU MEAN YOU *ORDERED* YOUR CARPET TO SAVE ME??

WE ARE TEAM-MATES, ARE WE NOT?

I WOULD RATHER BE DEAD THAN ALLIED WITH YOU!

NOT VERY POPULAR WITH THE LADIES, ARE YOU, ARAB?

BRITISH SWINE!

TSK-TSK! YOU OUGHT TO LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR TEMPER, SINBAD!

LOSING YOUR HEAD CAN ONLY COST YOU THE FIGHT! SEE?

UNNGHH!

NOW FOR YOU, LADY BLUE!

YOU ARE OVER-CONFIDENT, ENGLISHMAN!

I'VE NOTICED YOUR STAFF IS THE SOURCE OF YOUR POWER!

LET US SEE HOW WELL YOU DO WITHOUT IT!

MY STAR-SCEPTRE--!

I'M FALLING!!

OH! I DID NOT MEAN--!

I'VE GOT TO TWIST JUST RIGHT-- GET MY FEET BENEATH ME!

KER-RAK!

WAIT-- WHAT'S--?

KABLAM!

ONE DOWN-- AND ONE TOO DAZED TO STOP ME!

THAT MEANS MY ONLY REMAINING OPPONENT--

--IS A CERTAIN GREEN-HAIRED LADY!

GUIDED BY HIS ARMOR'S BUILT-IN SENSORS--

--IRON MAN GETS A FIX ON THE ENERGY TRANSMITTED BY THE PRIZE!

AND WHERE THE PRIZE IS--

--THERE THE GOLDEN AVENGER SUSPECTS HE WILL FIND...

SHE-HULK!

I HAD HOPED IT WOULDN'T COME TO THIS!

DON'T WORRY, SHELLHEAD-- I FIGHT CLEAN!

ALL RIGHT. BUT, I INSIST, LADIES FIRST.

NOT YOU TOO, IRON MAN! CAN'T EVEN YOU FIGHT WITHOUT CONDESCENSION?

I GUESS I WAS JUST RAISED TO BE CHIVALROUS, SHE-HULK.

AND I WAS TAUGHT THAT IF A WOMAN WANTS ANYTHING IN THIS WORLD--

--SHE HAS TO FIGHT FOR IT! UNGHH!

ZAP

SHE-HULK--?

DID I GIVE HER A STRONGER REPULSOR BLAST THAN SHE CAN HANDLE?

BEFORE I SEARCH FOR THE GLOBE, I'D BETTER MAKE CERTAIN SHE'LL BE OKAY!

IRON MAN!

MY TEAMMATE IS SO ABSORBED IN THE CONDITION OF HIS OPPONENT THAT HE HAS NOT HEARD MY APPROACH--

--OR NOTICED THE GOLDEN PRIZE GLEAMING FROM WITHIN THAT BLACK-SMITH'S FORGE!

THUS, WHILE OUR TEAM WINS--

--IT WILL BE THE ARABIAN KNIGHT WHO BEARS THE PRIZE BACK TO THE UNKNOWN!

THE SECOND CONTEST ENDS. THE CONTESTANTS BLINK OUT OF SIGHT.

THE SCORE STANDS TIED AT ONE TO ONE!

NEXT MONTH: ENDGAME!

# MARVEL SUPER HEROES-1982

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

**KARKAS**
(No other name known) Huge red-skinned monster of the sub-species of humanity called the Deviants. Possesses great strength and intelligence. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #8.

**KA-ZAR**
(Lord Kevin Plunder) British nobleman raised in the jungle who has honed all of his natural abilities to their utmost level. Current whereabouts: Savage Land, Antarctica. First appearance: X-MEN #10.

**LIVING MUMMY**
(N'Kantu) African chieftain embalmed by Egyptian masters some 4000 years ago who has since awakened in recent years to possess super-strength and limited invulnerability. Current whereabouts: Egypt. First appearance: SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #5.

**MACHINE MAN**
(Aaron Stack, insurance investigator) Robot possessing human-level intelligence and special mechanical abilities such as extendable limbs, electromagnetic circuitry, and superhuman strength. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance (as Mister Machine): 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY #8. First appearance (as Machine Man): MACHINE MAN #1.

**MADROX**
(James Madrox) American mutant with the ability to create identical living duplicates of himself at will. Current whereabouts: Muir Island, Scotland. First appearance: GIANT- SIZE FANTASTIC FOUR #4.

**MAKKARI**
(Name in own language unknown) Eternal possessing super-speed and levitation powers. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #5.

**MARIONETTE**
(Princess Mari) Humanoid alien from the Microversian planet called Homeworld, possessing acrobatic skills and fighting prowess. Current whereabouts: Earth. Member of the Micronauts. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1.

**MEDUSA**
(Name in own language unknown) Inhuman with the power to animate her long hair. Member of the Royal Family of Inhumans, Sister of Crystal. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #36.

**MENTOR**
(A'Lars) Super-human possessing the power of flight, with Eternal ancestry. Father of Eros and Thanos, ruler of Titan. Current whereabouts: Titan. First appearance: CAPTAIN MARVEL #27.

**MICROTRON**
Non-humanoid robot constructed in the Microverse. Member of the Micronauts. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1.

**MISTER FANTASTIC**
(Reed Richards, scientist/adventurer) American possessing cosmic ray-derived power of super-malleability. Able to stretch any part of his body to great lengths and mold his pliant flesh into numerous shapes. One of the great intellects of the world, he is the leader of the Fantastic Four. Husband of the Invisible Girl. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

**MOCKINGBIRD**
(Roberta Morse, physicist, ex-SHIELD agent) American possessing great natural agility and martial prowess. Uses battle-staves as a weapon. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance (as Bobbi Morse): ASTONISHING TALES #6. First appearance (as Huntress): MARVEL SUPER-ACTION #1. First appearance (as Mockingbird): MARVEL TEAM-UP #95.

**MOONDRAGON**
(Heather Douglas) American-born priestess of Titan, trained in the martial arts, telepathy, and psychokinesis. Daughter of Drax the Destroyer. Occasional member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: vicinity of the Earth. First appearance (as Madame MacEvil): IRON MAN #54. First appearance (as Moondragon): DAREDEVIL #105.

**MOON KNIGHT**
(Marc Spector, mercenary; alias Jake Lockley, cab driver; Steven Grant, millionaire) American possessing great natural strength and agility and mastery of martial arts. Uses crescent-darts, a truncheon, and glider-cape. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: WEREWOLF BY NIGHT #32.

**NAMORITA**
(alias Nita Prentiss, student) Atlantean amphibian able to breathe underwater and swim with incredible speed. Cousin to Namor. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: SUB-MARINER #51.

**NANOTRON**
Non-humanoid robot built in the Microverse. Current member of the Micronauts. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #30.

**NIGHTCRAWLER**
(Kurt Wagner, student) German mutant with dark blue skin, a prehensile tail, three-toed feet, pointed ears. Possesses the ability to teleport short distances and has natural acrobatic ability. Member of the X-Men. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. First appearance: GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1.

**NIGHTHAWK**
(Kyle Richmond, industrialist) American who took a serum to give him double human strength at night. Uses a jet-pack and wings. Occasional member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York vicinity. First appearance: AVENGERS #70.

**NIGHT RIDER**
(Hamilton Slade, archeologist) American who becomes possessed by the spirit of his ancestor, granting him the ghostly powers of invisibility and intangibility. Carries a gun that shoots "phantom bullets" and a lariat. Rides Banshee, a ghostly horse that can fly. Member of the Rangers. Current whereabouts: American Southwest. First appearance: GHOST RIDER #56.

**PALADIN**
(Real name unknown) American mercenary possessing great agility and fighting prowess. Wears a bullet-proof vest and carries a gun. Current whereabouts: New York environs. First appearance: DAREDEVIL #150.

**LE PEREGRINE**
(Real name unknown) Frenchman who flies by means of artificial anti-gravitic wings. His name means "Falcon" in English. Current whereabouts: Paris, France. First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**POLARIS**
(Lorna Dane) American mutant with the ability to control magnetism. Current whereabouts: Rio Diablo, New Mexico. First appearance: X-MEN #49.

**POWERHOUSE**
(Name in own language unknown) Humanoid alien from planet Xandar who possesses ability to absorb power from whatever he touches. Member of the Syfon Warriors. Current whereabouts: planet Xandar. First appearance: NOVA #2.

**POWER MAN**
(Luke Cage) American possessing great strength and nearly-invulnerable skin. Partner of Iron Fist in Heroes for Hire. Former member of the Fantastic Four and Defenders. First appearance: HERO FOR HIRE #1.

**PROFESSOR X**
(Charles Xavier, headmaster) American mutant with the psionic powers of telepathy and astral projection. Founder of the X-Men. Confined to a wheelchair. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. First appearance: X-MEN #1.

**QUASAR**
(Wendell Vaughn, security chief) American wielding a pair of power-bands from Uranus, capable of tapping any power-source and transforming that energy into solid objects or force-beams. Also enables him to fly. First appearance (as Marvel Man): CAPTAIN AMERICA #217. First appearance (as Quasar): HULK #234.

**QUICKSILVER**
(Pietro Frank – last name adopted) Romanian mutant possessing super-speed. Son of Magneto, brother of Scarlet Witch, husband of Crystal. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: X-MEN #4.

**RAZORBACK**
(Buford Hollis, truck driver) American with great natural strength and endurance, who uses various electronic gimmicks, such as an electrified costume. Drives a semi truck. Current whereabouts: Texarkana, Arkansas. First appearance: SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #13.

**RED WOLF**
(Will Talltrees, construction worker, alias Tommy Thundercloud) American Indian with great fighting prowess, stamina, and agility. Carries a Coup Stick as a weapon. Accompanied by a pet wolf, Lobo. Member of the Rangers. Current whereabouts: American southwest. First appearance: AVENGERS#80.

**REJECT**
(No other name known) Human-looking offspring of the sub-species of humanity called the Deviants. Has great fighting strength and ferocity. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #8.

**ROM**
(No other name known) Humanoid alien in cybernetic armor from planet Galador. Is able to fly and has great strength and near-invulnerability. Carries a ray-gun capable of disintegrating aliens known as Dire Wraiths. Current whereabouts: Clairton, Virginia. First appearance: ROM #1.

**SABRA**
(Ruth Ben-Sera, policewoman) Israeli who was appointed by the government to be a costumed agent. Wears an anti-gravitic cape that shoots energy-quills, and possesses super-strength. "Sabra" means native-born Israeli. Current whereabouts: Israel. First appearance: HULK #256.

**SASQUATCH**
(Dr. Walter Langkowski, biophysicist) Canadian who drinks a serum to become a giant furry super-strong beast who retains his human intelligence. Member of Alpha Flight. Current whereabouts: Canada. First appearance: X-MEN #120.

**SCARLET WITCH**
(Wanda Frank – last name adopted) Romanian mutant who possesses a probability-altering "hex" that causes poltergeist-like phenomena. She has also trained in the actual art of magick. Daughter of Magneto, sister of Quicksilver, wife of the Vision. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: New York environs. First appearance: X-MEN #4.

**SERSI**
(No other name known) Eternal possessing the ability to transmute elements from one form to another. Can also levitate like all Eternals. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: ETERNALS #3.

**SHAMAN**
(Dr. Michael Twoyoungmen, physician) Canadian Indian possessing various mystical abilities, such as animating totems, controlling the weather, etc. Member of Alpha Flight. Current whereabouts: Canada. First appearance: X-MEN #120.

**SHAMROCK**
(Real name unknown) Irish woman possessing great acrobatic prowess and a probability-field altering aura psychokinetically causing "good luck" to occur to her. Current whereabouts: Dublin, Ireland. First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**SHANNA THE SHE-DEVIL**
(Shanna O'Hara, ex-veterinarian) Irish-American possessing great natural agility, fighting prowess, and stamina. Current whereabouts: the Savage Land, Antartica. First appearance: SHANNA THE SHE-DEVIL #1.

**SHE-HULK**
(Jennifer Walters, lawyer) American who can transform at will into a super-strong, green-skinned superhuman, due to gamma-irradiated blood in her system. Current whereabouts: Los Angeles. First appearance: SHE-HULK #1.

**SHOOTING STAR**
(Victoria Star, rodeo performer) American wielding two six-shooters which shoot paralysis-stars. Incredibly acrobatic and appears able to fly for short distances (whether this is natural power of by means of a device is not yet known). Member of the Rangers. Current whereabouts: American Southwest. First appearance: HULK #265.

**SHROUD**
(Real name unknown; uses no alias) American who was trained by the Cult of Kali in Tibet to be able to summon impenetrable darkness at will. He was also trained in the martial arts. Current whereabouts: Los Angeles. First appearance: SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP #5.

**SILVER SURFER**
(Norrin Radd) Humanoid alien from Zenn-La with cosmic powers to rearrange molecules and shoot energy-blasts. Rides an indestructable flying surf board. Former herald of Galactus. Current whereabouts: space. First appearance: FANASTIC FOUR #48.

**SNOWBIRD**
(Corporal Anne McKenzie, Royal Canadian Mounted Police) Canadian able to fly and also bodily transform herself into various wild animals. Member of Alpha Flight. Current whereabouts: Canada. First appearance: X-MEN #120.

**SON OF SATAN**
(Daimon Hellstrom, occult expert) American whose father is an arch-demon. Possesses supernatural strength and wields a trident and rides a chariot driven by fiery horses. Occasional member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #12.

**SPACE GLIDER**
(Commander Arcturus Rann) Humanoid alien born on the Microversian planet called Homeworld, possessing fighting prowess. Wields ray-guns and glider-wings. Counterpart of the Time Traveller. Leader of the Micronauts. Current whereabouts: Earth. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1.

**SPIDER-MAN**
(Peter Parker, college student/freelance photographer) American possessing super-strength, super-reflexes, incredible agility, the ability to stick to virtually any surface, and a danger-detecting "spider-sense." Uses a chemical web-shooting device enabling him to swing from the rooftops, entangle persons or things, and create simple objects such as shields and spheres. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: AMAZING ADULT FANTASY #15.

**SPIDER-WOMAN**
(Jessica Drew, private investigator) American possessing super-strength, super-reflexes, great agility, and a bio-electric discharge called a "venom blast." Uses "glider wings" to fly. Current whereabouts: San Francisco, California. First appearance: MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #32.

**SPRITE**
(Name in own language unknown) Eternal possessing the ability to transmute matter including own body. Is able to levitate like all members of his race. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: ETERNALS #9.

**SPRITE II**
(Kathryn Pryde, student) American mutant possessing the ability to "phase" through solid objects at will. Current member of the X-Men. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. First appearance: X-MEN #129.

**STAR-DANCER**
(Shanga) Humanoid alien from unidentified world who possesses cosmic power to rearrange molecules and fly, plus a special "matrix sense" by which to astrogate through space. Current whereabouts: space. First appearance: MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #79.

**STINGRAY**
(Dr. Walter Newell, oceanographer) American who uses special deep-sea suit, enabling him to breathe underwater, withstand the ocean's pressure, swim with great speed, and glide through the air for short distances. Also uses an electrical sting-blast. Current whereabouts: Hydrobase, Atlantic Ocean. First appearance: SUB-MARINER #19.

**STORM**
(Ororo Munroe) African-American mutant possessing the ability to control the weather. Able to fly by riding the wind currents. Current leader of the X-Men. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. First appearance: GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1.

**SUB-MARINER**
(Prince Namor, ruler of Atlantis) Hybrid Atlantean-human possessing super-strength, the ability to breathe underwater, super-speed, and the ability to fly through the air for short distances by means of his ankle-wings. Occasional member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: Atlantis. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #4.

**SUNFIRE**
(Shiro Yoshida, student) Japanese mutant possessing the ability to discharge solar heat through his hands, and fly. Current whereabouts: Japan. First appearance: X-MEN #64.

**TAGAK THE LEOPARD LORD**
(No other name known) Extra-dimensional humanoid with great athletic ability and fighting prowess. Though blind, he is able to see by telepathic link with his pet leopard, Opar. Current whereabouts: his home dimension. First appearance: DAREDEVIL #72.

**TALISMAN**
(Real name unknown) Australian aborigine with the mystic power of entering "dream-time," the mythic realm beyond physical existence, enabling him to pass through objects and teleport short distances. Is also able to separate his astral form from his physical body. Uses the bull-roarer to open up a portal into "dream-time" large enough to engulf others inside First appearance: CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS #1.

**TAMARA**
(No other name known) Water-breathing humanoid extra-terrestrial able to withstand the ocean depths and swim with incredible speed. Current whereabouts: Atlantic Ocean. First appearance: SUB-MARINER #58.

**TEXAS TWISTER**
(Drew Daniels, rodeo performer, ex-SHIELD agent) American mutant possessing the power to create a vortex of air around his body, enabling him to fly and strike with hurricane force. Member of the Rangers. Current whereabouts: American Southwest. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #177.

**THENA**
(Name in own language unknown) Eternal possessing her species' standard powers. Daughter of Zuras. Current whereabouts: unknown. First appearance: ETERNALS #5.

**THING**
(Benjamin Grimm, adventurer) American possessing super-strength and a rock-like epidermis making him impervious to virtually all harm. Member of the Fantasitc Four. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

**THOR**
(Donald Blake, physician) Asgardian man-god possessing great strength and stamina. Wields a mystic throwing hammer enabling him to fly and summon thunder, lightning, and rain. The hammer is enchanted so that it always returns to him and can be lifted by no other living being but Thor. Son of Odin, king of the Asgardians. Member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: Chicago, Illinois. First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #83.

**3-D MAN**
(Hal Chandler, occupation unknown) American who can transform into a super-strong acrobat by donning the glasses in which his brother was transformed into a two-dimensional image. Active during the 1950's, now in semi-retirement. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #35.

**THUNDRA**
(No other name known) Warrior from an alternate future of Earth genetically bred to be super-strong. Current whereabouts: her home reality. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #129.

**TIGRA**
(Greer Nelson, ex-secretary) American able to change into a humanoid cat with various attributes: agility, strength, and reflexes. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: North America. First appearance (as The Cat): CLAWS OF THE CAT #1. First appearance (as Tigra): GIANT-SIZE CREATURES #1.

**TORPEDO**
(Brock Jones, ex-football player, ex-insurance agent, high school coach) American who wears strength-enhancing suit enabling him to fly at great speeds. Current whereabouts: Clairton, Virginia. First appearance: DAREDEVIL #126.

**TRITON**
(Name in own language unknown) Inhuman with aquatic abilities: able to breathe underwater, swim with great speed, and withstand undersea pressures. Member of the Royal Family of Inhumans. Current whereabouts: the Moon. First appearance: FANTASTIC FOUR #45.

**UNION JACK III**
(Joey Chapman) Britisher with natural acrobatic prowess. Carries daggers. Inherited the suit from the original Union Jack, Lord Falsworth. Current whereabouts: London, England. First appearance: CAPTAIN AMERICA #254.

**URSA MAJOR**
(Major Mikhail Ursus) Russian mutant with the ability to transform himself into a huge brown bear with superhuman strength. Member of the Soviet Super-Soldiers. Current whereabouts: Moscow, Russia. First appearance: HULK #258.

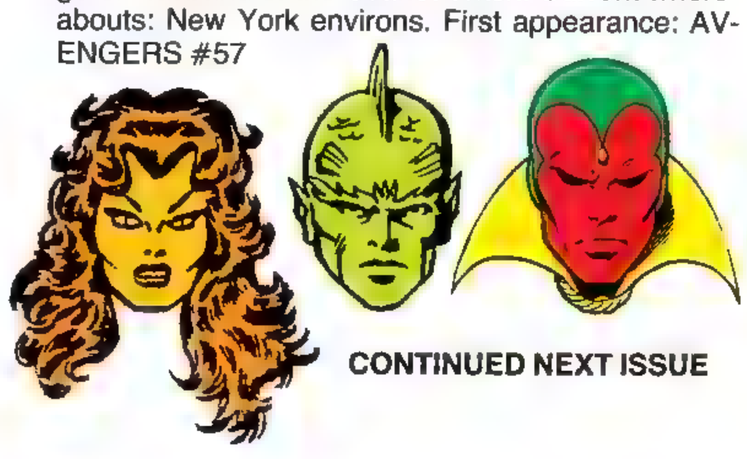
**VALKYRIE**
(No alias currently used) Asgardian goddess possessing great strength. Wields a sword and rides a winged horse, Aragon. Formerly a member of the Valkyrior, the Choosers of the Slain. Current member of the Defenders. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance (Enchantress possessing her form): AVENGERS #83. First appearance (in Barbara Norriss's mortal body): DEFENDERS #4. First appearance (in own body): DEFENDERS #109.

**VANGUARD**
(Nicolai Krylenko) Russian mutant with the ability to reflect an opponent's might against him/her. Uses a hammer and sickle to focus this power in the form of a power-bolt. Brother of Darkstar. Member of the Soviet Super-Soldiers. Current whereabouts: Moscow, Russia. First appearance: IRON MAN #109.

**VENUS**
(alias Victoria Starr, professor) Olympean goddess of love who sometimes takes leave of Olympus to live among mortals. Her main power seems to be making people love one another. Called Aphrodite among fellow gods. Current whereabouts: Olympus. First appearance: SUB-MARINER #57.

**VINDICATOR**
(James MacDonald Hudson, reasearch physicist) Canadian who uses a special uniform to fly, shoot energy bolts and create a force field around himself. Leader of Alpha Flight. Current whereabouts: Canada. First appearance (as Weapon Alpha): X-MEN #109. First appearance (as Vindicator): X-MEN #120.

**VISION**
(No regular alias used) Android possessing the ability to change his density at will, thus becoming intangible and lighter than air or as hard and heavy as diamond. Can also project solar-beams through his eyes. Believed to possess the body of the original Human Torch and the brain patterns of Simon Williams (Wonder Man). Former members of the Avengers. Husband of the Scarlet Witch. Current whereabouts: New York environs. First appearance: AVENGERS #57



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# MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS™

AND THE WINNER... DEATH!

HANNIGAN/MILGROM

Stan Lee PRESENTS

# MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS!

IN AN ORBITING ARENA ON THE THRESHOLD OF SPACE, EVERY SINGLE SUPER HERO ON EARTH HAS BEEN GATHERED...

...TO HELPLESSLY AWAIT THE OUTCOME OF THE MOST FANTASTIC CONTEST OF ALL TIME!

TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH, TWENTY-FOUR OF THEIR NUMBER HAVE BEEN SENT TO COMPETE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.

THEIR OBJECT: TO FIND THE PIECES OF THE GOLDEN GLOBE OF LIFE, A MYSTIC OBJECT CAPABLE OF RAISING THE DEAD!

TWELVE ARE THE CHOSEN PAWNS OF THE **GRANDMASTER**, THE GALACTIC GAMBLING ADDICT!

THE OTHER TWELVE PLAY FOR HIS OPPONENT, THE **UNKNOWN!**

TWO CONTESTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN WAGED.

THE WINNERS WERE **DAREDEVIL**, AGENT OF THE GRANDMASTER...AND THE **ARABIAN KNIGHT**, AGENT OF THE UNKNOWN.

TWO CONTESTS REMAIN YET TO BE PLAYED. THE GRANDMASTER NEEDS TO WIN BOTH OF THEM IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE THE GOLDEN GLOBE TO RESTORE LIFE TO HIS IMMORTAL BROTHER.

AS FOR THE HEROES, MANY HAVE THE FEELING THAT NO MATTER WHICH OMNIPOTENT WINS, THE EARTH WILL LOSE...

CHAPTER 4

# THIRD CONTEST: SIEGE IN THE CITY OF THE DEAD!

CRIPES! TELEPORTIN' ALWAYS MAKES ME SICK TO MY STOMACH! WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?

BEATS THE CRUD OUTTA ME, ROCKY! BUT IF WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FIGHT, LET'S GET AT IT!

PARDON, *MES AMI*, BUT I BELIEVE IT IS THAT TEAM MATERIALIZING OVER THERE WHOM WE ARE TO FIGHT!

**THE UNKNOWN'S TEAM:**
VANGUARD
ANGEL
BLACK PANTHER

**THE GRANDMASTER'S TEAM:**
WOLVERINE
THE THING
LE PEREGRINE

Story by... MARK GRUENWALD STEVEN GRANT
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Edited by... MARK GRUENWALD TOM DeFALCO
Editor In Chief... JIM SHOOTER

YEAH, FROG, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT! LOOKS LIKE YOU AN' ME ARE TEAMMATES!

YOU GOT A NAME?

OUI! IN MY NATIVE FRANCE I AM CALLED... *LE PEREGRINE!*

WINGED CHAMPION OF LE VERITE, LE JUSTICE, AND LE DRAPEAU DE LA FRANCE!

SWELL. AS FOR YOU, SHORTY--YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE NEW *X-MEN*, AIN'TCHA?

YOU KNOW IT, OLD-TIMER. THE NAME'S *WOLVERINE*.

AND I'M AS MEAN AS IT SOUNDS.

WELL, JAWIN' AIN'T GONNA GET US OUT OF HERE! LET'S FIND THE PRIZE AN' GET HOME!

SURE--AS LONG AS ONE THING'S STRAIGHT. I'M A LONER. I GO MY OWN WAY.

SUITS ME, SHORT-STUFF. DON'T GET LOST.

ACROSS THE PLAIN, THE UNKNOWN'S CHAMPIONS WATCH AS THE GRAND-MASTER'S TEAM DISPERSES!

OUR OPPONENTS SEEM MOST UN-DISCIPLINED.

IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, *ANGEL*. HOW ARE THE REST OF THE X-MEN?

AS STRANGE AS EVER! THERE'S A WHOLE NEW TEAM NOW, T'CHALLA. I WAS WITH THEM A WHILE BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT. HOW ARE THE AVENGERS?

I HAVE NOT BEEN AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE AVENGERS OF LATE.

COMRADES, WE WASTE PRECIOUS TIME THAT WOULD BE BETTER SPENT SEEKING THE PRIZE.

SINCE A STRATEGY IS ESSENTIAL, I PROPOSE THAT I-- *VANGUARD*--SERVE AS FIELD COMMANDER! SUCH WAS MY RANK IN THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS!

LISTEN, IVAN-- IT JUST SO HAPPENS THAT THE *BLACK PANTHER* IS THE LEADER OF AN ENTIRE AFRICAN NATION!

IF ANYONE LEADS US-- *HE* SHOULD!

WE ARE *ALL* CAPABLE OF LEADERSHIP, ANGEL-- HENCE A LEADER IS NOT NECESSARY.

VERY WELL. THEN WE MUST SET FORTH AND LOCATE OUR OPPONENTS, SCOUT THEIR STRENGTHS, HOLD THEM IN DETENTE.

THAT MAY NOT BE NECESSARY. OUR PRIZE MAY BE GAINED BY STEALTH AND CUNNING, NOT CONFLICT.

*BAH*. WE WASTE TIME, ANGEL-- YOU BEGIN AERIAL RECONAIS-SANCE.

I WAS GOING TO ANYWAY, RED.

NOW THEN, BLACK-GARBED ONE, HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO USE STEALTH AND CUNNING ON A FLAT PLAIN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT--?

PANTHER--?

HE'S GONE! BUT HOW--?

HMMM. PERHAPS STEALTH AND CUNNING MAY BE OF SOME USE.

ALREADY HUNDREDS OF METERS AHEAD OF VANGUARD, THE BLACK PANTHER IS THE FIRST TO SET EYES ON...

A CITY...OF THE DEAD?!

NO--A VAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION REVEALING HUNDREDS OF *CERAMIC WARRIORS!*

EVEN IN WAKANDA--WHERE WONDERS ARE COMMONPLACE--NEWS OF THIS DISCOVERY WAS GREETED WITH ASTONISHMENT!

LEGEND HAS IT THAT A CHINESE EMPEROR SOUGHT IMMORTALITY IN MUCH THE SAME WAY AS THE PHAROAHS OF ANCIENT EGYPT--

--BY BUILDING A MASSIVE TEMPLE TO HOUSE HIM IN HIS AFTERLIFE, COMPLETE WITH LIFESIZE REPLICAS OF HIS IMPERIAL ARMY!

SURELY THE UNKNOWN WOULD NOT HAVE ME *DESTROY* SUCH IRREPLACEABLE ART TREASURES TO RETRIEVE THE PRIZE! HMM...MY JUNGLE-BRED SENSES DETECT... AN UNFAMILIAR SCENT!

HUH--? HE *DUCKED!*

NICE MOVES, CATMAN. I'M NOT EASILY EVADED.

BUT YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR MIND IF YOU THINK I'M GONNA LET A LITTLE THING LIKE SPEED COME BETWEEN ME AND THE PRIZE.

YOU SEE, I'VE GOT SOMETHING *MORE* THAN JUST SPEED...

SNIK

*ADAMANTIUM CLAWS FLASH FROM THE BACK OF WOLVERINE'S HAND AT COMMAND...*

*MEANWHILE, HIGH ABOVE THE ANCIENT CITY...*

UH-OH! LOOKS LIKE I'M NOT THE ONLY HERO WITH WINGS!

*LE ANGEL!* LONG 'AVE I READ OF YOU, MON AMI!

NOW LET US SEE IF YOU ARE AS FORMIDABLE AS I'VE READ.

I HATE TO RUFFLE YOUR PINFEATHERS, FRENCHIE, BUT--

WHUNFFF!

YOU WERE NOT EXPECTING A SAVATE KICK, EH?

TRUTH TO TELL, I WASN'T! BUT YOU WON'T CATCH ME WITH THAT TRICK AGAIN!

ZAT IS UN-DOUBTEDLY TRUE--

SWOK

--BUT I NEVAIR REPEAT ZE SAME TRICK TWICE ANY-WAY!

UNGHH!

A BACK-KICK! THIS CLOWN'S FIGHTING RINGS AROUND ME!

ME--THE GUY WHO PRACTICALLY INVENTED THE IDEA OF THE WINGED SUPER-HERO!

THIS GUY COMBINED FLYING WITH THE MARTIAL ARTS!

BELOW, AT THE BASE OF AN UNEXCAVATED BURIAL MOUND...

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY ELSE HAD THE SAME IDEA I HAD ABOUT USIN' THIS HILL AS A LOOKOUT!

SO I GUESS IT'S TIME TA PLAY *KING O' THE MOUNTAIN!*

'SCUSE ME, SONNY--YOU'RE STANDIN' ON MY TURF!

YOU ARE THE *THING*-- OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR--DA?

DA-- I MEAN, YEAH! AN' WHO MIGHT YOU BE?

*VANGUARD*, OF THE SOVIET UNION-- HERO OF THE MASSES!

WELL, I HATE TA UP-SET YER FANS--

--BUT THIS IS WHERE YOU BUY THE FARM, RUSSKIE! WHULP!

YOU ARE AS ARROGANT AS EVERY AMERICAN I'VE MET--

--BUT I AM THE FOREMOST HERO OF THE SOVIET STATE... AND MY WEAPONS TURN THE AGGRESSIVE MIGHT OF AN ENEMY BACK UPON HIM!

THEN THEY'D BEST START WORK-ING OVERTIME, RED--'CAUSE I'M AS AGGRESSIVE AS THEY COME!

IN THE ANCIENT FUNERARY CITADEL NAMED AFTER EMPEROR QIN...

WOLVERINE, THIS IS BUT A *GAME!*

WHY DO YOU USE YOUR *CLAWS?*

ANY FIGHT WORTH FIGHTIN' IS WORTH WINNIN', BLACKY!

C'MON OUT! HIDIN' WON'T KEEP ME FROM SCENTIN' YOUR SPOOR!

SO WOLVERINE'S ANIMAL-SENSES ARE AS ACUTE AS MY OWN!

STILL, HE CANNOT POSSIBLY POSSESS MY JUNGLE-SWIFTNESS!

CAN HE?

SO THERE YA ARE!

LISTEN, PAL, WOLVERINES MAY NOT HAVE THE REP THAT PANTHERS HAVE--

--BUT MY MONEY'S RIDIN' ON *ME!*

HE IS... *STRONG!!*

BUT CAN HE REALLY MEAN TO SLAY ME?

*OVERHEAD...*

LE PEREGRINE FLIES AS WELL AS I DO-- AND FIGHTS BETTER! MY ONLY HOPE LIES IN *OUTMANEUVERING* HIM--

--OR IN *ARMING* MYSELF!

IF THIS CHINESE PEASANT PARALYZED BY THE GRAND-MASTER'S POWERS DOESN'T MIND--

--I THINK I'LL JUST BORROW HIS WALKING-STICK!

SO. ZE FAMOUS ANGEL FLEES FROM LE PEREGRINE!

SO I'D LIKE YOU TO THINK, PAL.

WHY PROLONG ZE AGONY, MON AMI? WHY NOT JUST LET ME END ZIS CHASE BY BEATING YOU?

THAT'S IT, PEREGRINE-- KEEP TALKING!

PERHAPS AFTER ZIS I WEEL BE ASKED TO JOIN ZE X-MEN, EH?

PERHAPS, PEREGRINE--

--BUT DON'T COUNT ON IT!

?

THERE'S MORE TO AERIAL COMBAT THAN SPEED AND STRENGTH!

GLKKK!

THERE'S ALSO A NIFTY LITTLE ITEM CALLED... SKILL!

MAIS OUI, ANGEL--BUT SKILL IS A COMMODITY ON WHICH YOU 'AVE NO MONOPOLY!

BLAST IT, HE'S GOT HIS LEGS AROUND MY TORSO -- SQUEEZING THE AIR OUT OF ME!

GOT TO MAKE HIM--

--LET GO!

UNHH!

SHORTLY...

YOU'RE GOOD, PEREGRINE-- I'LL GIVE YOU THAT!

I WON THIS LITTLE ROUND ON A WING AND A PRAYER!

MEANWHILE...

YOU RISE TO YOUR FEET??

DIDJA EXPECT ME TO GET UP ON MY HANDS?!

NO!

I EXPECTED YOU TO SINK TO YOUR KNEES IN ABJECT *DEFEAT!*

RED, YOU GOT A WHOLE LOT TO LEARN!

MY WEAPONS!!

ANYONE WHO RELIES ON SOMETHIN' OTHER THAN HIS OWN POWER--

--IS JUST ASKIN' FOR IT TO BE TAKEN AWA-- *OW!*

WEAPONLESS OR NOT, I AM STILL A *HERO!*

YER USIN' YER HEAD I GOTTA ADMIT! MEBBE SOMEDAY YOU'LL EVEN BE IN A CLASS WITH ME!

KPLOW!

WHEN THAT DAY COMES, BE SURE TA VISIT ME IN MY NURSIN' HOME, HUH?

GIVE IT UP, CAT-MAN! YOU KNOW YOU AIN'T GOT A PRAYER!

SQUIRT, JUST WHAT IN BLAZES DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOIN'?

ELIMINATIN' THE OPPOSITION, UGLY! ANY OBJECTIONS?

ONE, THE PANTHER'S A PAL OF MINE.

SEEMS NOBODY TOLD YOU THIS IS JUST SOME KINDA GAME, PIPSQUEAK!

THEY TOLD ME-- BUT I DON'T *PLAY* GAMES. WHAT-?!

IF YOU WISH TO WIN, WOLVERINE, YOU SHOULD KEEP YOUR MIND ON THE BATTLE!

YOU TAKE THE CAKE, SHORTY! YOU REALLY WERE SET TA ICE THE PANTHER, WEREN'T YA?

HE HAD NOT BEATEN ME YET, BEN.

I HAD YA LICKED SIX WAYS TO SUNDAY, BLACKY!

HALF-PINT, IT'S TOO BAD YOU AN' ME ARE TEAMMATES! YOURS IS ONE BUTT I'D LIKE TA BOOT FROM HERE TO BOISE!

ANYTIME YOU'D LIKE TO TRY IT, ROCKHEAD...!

HEY! HOLD ON--I SMELL SOMETHIN'!

AS DO I! SOMETHING ALIEN TO THIS ANCIENT CITY!

IT CAN ONLY BE--

THE *PRIZE!* BEN-- DIG RIGHT THERE!

PWOOH

SURE, PAL.

I'D JUST AS SOON GET THIS COCKAMAMIE CONTEST OVER WITH.

I THINK I'VE GOT IT...

THIS IS IT, PLAYMATES! PARTY'S OVER--AN' I GOT OUR BUS-PASS HOME!

*THE TWO TEAMS FADE FROM SIGHT!*

*THE SCORE IS NOW GRANDMASTER-- TWO, THE UNKNOWN-- ONE!*

CHAPTER 5

# FOURTH CONTEST: STRUGGLE IN THE JUNGLE!

THE UNKNOWN'S TEAM:
STORM
SHAMROCK
COLLECTIVE MAN

THE GRANDMASTER'S TEAM:
SASQUATCH
CAPTAIN AMERICA
BLITZKRIEG

BEGORRAH! 'TISN'T IRELAND WE'VE BEEN SENT TO, TEAMMATES!

NO, WE ARE SOMEWHERE NEAR THE EQUATOR.

AND WE ARE NOT ALONE!

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO LIKE STAYING HERE TOO LONG! HAVE YOU EVER SMELLED SWEAT-SOAKED FUR?

GOTT IN HIMMEL, WHAT KIND OF PURGATORY HAS THE GRANDMASTER DISPATCHED US TO?

JUDGING FROM THE FLORA, I'D SAY WE WERE SOMEWHERE IN SOUTH AMERICA, FRIENDS!

CAPTAIN AMERICA? I AM HONORED TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE!
YOU'RE THE CANADIAN, SASQUATCH, RIGHT?
WHEW! THE BEAST'S GOT NOTHING ON THIS GUY!
AND I AM BLITZKRIEG, OF WEST GERMANY--
-- LORD OF THE LIGHTNING STRIKE!
HE'S OFF-- LEVITATING ON A FIELD OF ELECTRICALLY-CHARGED PARTICLES!
I SUGGEST WE GET GOING, TOO, CAP -- BEFORE WE PERISH FROM THE HEAT!
ALL RIGHT!
SO MUCH FOR TEAM-WORK!
'LO, TEAM-MATES! I'M SHAMROCK--
--IRELAND'S LUCKY LADY!
AND I AM TAO-YU, THE COLLECTIVE MAN--
--PEOPLE'S HERO OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA.
AND I AM ORORO, CALLED STORM.
SHALL WE SEEK AFTER THE PRIZE?
THIS JUNGLE IS VAST. FIVE PAIRS OF EYES--
--CAN SEARCH MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN ONE!
WE ARE FIVE BEINGS IN ONE! COLLECTIVELY, WE CAN DRAW ON THE POWER AND ABILITIES--
--OF ANY AND ALL CITIZENS OF OUR NATION!
LET US SPLIT UP TO SEARCH FOR THE PRIZE BY OUR OWN MEANS.
FINE BY ME!
D-DID YE SEE THAT, ORORO?
INSTEAD OF ONE TEAMMATE, WE SUDDENLY HAVE FIVE!

STORM IS THE FIRST TO ENCOUNTER A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSING TEAM...

A MAN--SOARING ON A BRIDGE OF LIGHTNING?!?

EH? A FLYING FRAULEIN?!

ZTRAK

THE LIGHTNING-STRIKE SHALL KEEP HER FROM HINDERING MY SEARCH!

AN ELECTRICITY-CAGE FORMING FROM THE AIR MOLECULES AROUND ME??

HOW DARE HE SEEK TO ENSNARE WITHIN AN ELEMENTAL PRISON--

--ONE WHO *COMMANDS* THE ELEMENTS?! ONE WHO IS MISTRESS OF THE STORM!!

MEANWHILE, BELOW...

I FEEL LIKE JOHNNY WEISMULLER DOING THIS! BUT IT SEEMS LIKE MY BEST BET TO FIND THE PRIZE...

'TIS LUCKY I AM THAT ME COSTUME BLENDS WITH THE FOLIAGE--

--OTHERWISE CAPTAIN AMERICA MIGHT HAVE SEEN ME--

--BEFORE I COULD SNATCH THIS VINE FROM OUT OF HIS GRASP!

H-HUH?!

WHERE IN BLAZES DID YOU COME FROM??

SUNNY IRELAND!

AND THE LUCKIEST LASS IN THAT FAIR LAND HAS LEFT YE HANGING HIGH AND DRY!

I'M AFRAID YOUR LUCK'S JUST RUN OUT, LASSIE! YOU'RE SWINGING BACK TOWARDS ME--

OH!

--AND I'VE GOT YOU!

OH, NO YOU DON'T, CAPTAIN!

SHE WIGGLED OUT OF MY GRASP! SHE'LL FALL TO HER DOOM!

ALSO MOVING THROUGH THE DENSE UNDERGROWTH...

PERHAPS I SHOULD TRANSFORM BACK TO MY NON-HAIRY HUMAN SELF BEFORE I GET HEAT-STROKE...

BUT THEN THEY'D MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SENT ANY-ONE TO COMPETE!

WHAT'S THIS? IT APPEARS TO BE RED CHINA'S ANSWER TO BRUCE LEE!

FIRST MOVE TO YOU, SON--

HAIII--

--WHUNNFF!

NOW I'M AFRAID IT'S MY TURN!

WHUP

THE MONSTER IS MIGHTY, INDEED!

YET HE IS BUT ONE AGAINST FIVE--

--WHO ARE BACKED BY THE POWER OF A NATION!

SUMMONING HIS COUNTERPART COUNTRY-MEN, TAO-YU MERGES THEIR MIGHT AND RETURNS TO THE FRAY...

BACK FOR MORE, EH, SHORTY?

WITH A CRY, THE FIVE-IN-ONE FIGHTER BOUNDS OVER THE SNOW-BEAST...

I ADMIRE YOUR PERSISTENCE, SONNY, BUT YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!

NIGHTY-NIGHT!

WHARUMP!

IN THE DARKENING SKIES ABOVE...

THE VERY LIGHTNING YOU SUMMON FORTH SERVES BLITZKRIEG, *FRAULEIN!* YIELD TO MY POWER!

YIELD??

COMMAND THE LIGHTNING YOU MAY, MY OPPONENT--

--BUT STORM ALONE CONTROLS THE HOWLING WIND, THE CRASHING THUNDER, THE DRIVING RAIN!

LEIBER GOTT!

CALLING THE ELEMENTS TO HER AID, STORM BLOWS THE MAN CALLED BLITZKRIEG OUT OF THE SKY...

I LIKE NOT THIS BEING A PAWN OF THE UNKNOWN--

--WHOEVER... OR WHATEVER... SHE MAY BE!

WHILE, BELOW...

THE UNDERGROWTH BROKE ME FALL! WHAT A LUCKY LANDING!

BUT THEN, PROBABILITY HAS ALWAYS GONE WILD WHEREVER I SHOW ME PRETTY HEAD!

I JUST HOPE LUCK'S WITH ME NOW--

--'CAUSE JUDGING BY THAT HANDSOME HERO'S BULGING BICEPS--

--IF HE CATCHES ME, I'M GOING TO NEED IT!

BUT LUCK, AS ALWAYS, FOLLOWS IN SHAMROCK'S FOOTSTEPS!

A PYTHON!

HISSS

BUT WHY DIDN'T IT ATTACK SHAMROCK??

NOT FAR AHEAD...

NOW THAT I'VE PINNED YOU, LITTLE MAN, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH YOU?

IT IS I WHO WILL DO SOMETHING TO YOU, MONSTER!

CONCENTRATING WITH ALL HIS MIGHT, THE COLLECTIVE MAN CALLS UPON THE STRENGTH OF TEN THOUSAND OF HIS COUNTRYMEN. WITH A SHIVER, THEIR COMBINED POWER COURSES THROUGH HIS BEING...

...AND IN A SINGLE FORCEFUL BLOW THROWS SASQUATCH HIGH INTO THE TREES!

WHUNFFF!

BUT THE STRAIN OF WIELDING SUCH POWER TAKES IT'S TOLL.

THE YOUNG COLLECTIVE MAN PASSES OUT.

UNNHH!

ELSEWHERE...

BLITZKRIEG! ANY SIGN OF THE PRIZE?

NEIN, HERR KAPITAN! I WAS DRIVEN FROM THE SKIES BY A REMARKABLE FRAULEIN!

BUT I SEE YOU HAVE HAD TROUBLES OF YOUR OWN!

YES, TROUBLE BY THE NAME OF *SHAMROCK.*

IT SEEMS SHE HAD ALL THE LUCK ON HER SIDE!

TEE-HEE! THAT'S RIGHT, CAPTAIN -- AND I HOPE TO BE LUCKIER STILL!

BLITZKRIEG, SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO TO FERRET OUT THE PRIZE!

WHILE I SEARCH FOR IT AMONG THE TREES!

JAWOHL, KAPITAN! BY SUPER-CHARGING THE AIR MOLECULES ABOUT ME--

--I CAN CREATE AN ELECTRICAL VORTEX THAT MAY REVEAL THE PRIZE!

BLITZKRIEG'S HURRICANE STRIPS THE LEAVES FROM THE NEARBY JUNGLE TREES--

--AND A GOLDEN GLEAM IS SEEN AMIDST THE VEGETATION!

THE PRIZE!!

ONCE I REACH IT THIS CONTEST WILL BE OVER!

SORRY, CAPTAIN! BUT I HAPPENED TO BE CLOSER TO IT THAN YOU!

JUST LUCKY, I GUESS!

SHAMROCK!

AS SHAMROCK TOUCHES THE GOLDEN GLOBE-QUARTER, SIX SUPER-HEROES VANISH!

FINAL SCORE: GRANDMASTER--3 UNKNOWN--1

# CHAPTER 6 WINNER TAKES NONE!

THE ORBITING SPACE STADIUM IS ELECTRIC WITH ANTICIPATION ...AS THE TWENTY-FOUR COMBATANTS MATERIALIZE IN UNISON, FRESH FROM THEIR BATTLES...

THE EYES OF THE GAMESMEN AND SPECTATORS BRAVE THE CRIMSON GLARE IN ORDER TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE GLITTERING GLOBE-QUARTERS AND THE HEROES WHO HAVE RETRIEVED THEM...

THE **GRANDMASTER'S** FACE BETRAYS HIS GRAVE CONCERN. THIS IS NOT JUST ANOTHER OF HIS IDLE DIVERSIONS. THE STAKES ARE HIGH...HIGHER THAN EVEN HE KNOWS...

THE **UNKNOWN** REMAINS AS INSCRUTABLE, AS UNFATHOMABLE AS EVER...

THE CONTEST IS OVER! ALL PAWNS HAVE RETURNED!

IT WOULD SEEM YOU HAVE WON, GRANDMASTER. THREE OF THE FOUR PAWNS BEARING THE GLOBE-PIECES ARE ***YOURS***...

YOU WHO HAVE PLAYED THE GAME SO VALIANTLY, I SALUTE YOU! AS I PROMISED AT THE ONSET, YOUR REWARD FOR YOUR COOPERATION IS THAT I SHALL NEITHER USE YOU NOR ANY DENIZEN OF EARTH IN MY GAMES EVER AGAIN!

SOME FORCE IS WRESTING THE GOLDEN PRIZE RIGHT OUT OF MY HANDS!

AS SOON AS I JOIN THE FOUR COMPONENTS, THE POWER TO RESURRECT MY IMMORTAL BROTHER THE *COLLECTOR* SHALL BE MINE!

THAT IS RIGHT, GRANDMASTER, THE POWER--AND THE CHOICE TO USE IT--WILL BE YOURS!

*AS THE GRANDMASTER PONDERS HIS OPPONENT'S CRYPTIC REMARK, THE PAWNS STAND ALL BUT IGNORED...*

I WAS THERE WHEN THE COLLECTOR DIED. HE WAS OBLITERATED TO COSMIC ASH!

WHOEVER HAS THE ABILITY TO GRANT THE GRANDMASTER POWER TO RESTORE LIFE TO HIS BROTHER--

--HAS GOTTA HAVE MORE IN MIND THAN PLAYIN' GAMES! I'VE PLAYED ENOUGH POKER TA BET THE UNKNOWN'S GOT AN ACE UP HER SLEEVE.

I DON'T LIKE THE SMELL OF THIS. THE BROAD IN THE PURPLE CLOAK REEKS OF DECAY...

THE SPIRITS OF MY ANCESTORS BID ME BEWARE. THE UNKNOWN BRINGS DEATH FOR SOMEONE HERE...!

AND NOW, I SHALL CLAIM MY PRIZES!

SLIPPING INTO DREAM-TIME, THE AUSTRALIAN MYSTIC KNOWN AS **TALISMAN** STEPS OUT OF HIS CORPOREAL FORM...

THE DEAD CANNOT BE RAISED!

TO ATTEMPT SUCH AN ACT-- TO RECLAIM ONE LIFE-FORCE WITH-OUT SUBSTITUTING ANOTHER--WOULD CAUSE A DISRUPTION OF THE NATURAL ORDER.

THE UNKNOWN MUST BE AWARE OF THAT!

PERHAPS SHE EVEN *DESIRES* IT! WHY? I MUST KNOW WHO THE UNKNOWN IS... BUT, AS I CANNOT TOUCH HER IN MY ASTRAL FORM, I MUST HAVE AN AGENT.

UNDETECTED, THE ASTRAL ABORIGINE TWIRLS HIS MYSTIC BULL-ROARER--

--AND THE SWIRLING ALTERED STATE KNOWN AS DREAM-TIME DISGUISES TALISMAN'S EFFORT TO REACH OUT TO...

...THE *INVISIBLE GIRL!*

I FEEL TALISMAN'S POWER--JUST AS I DID BACK ON THE ICE!

SUSAN RICHARDS, THE ALIENS CANNOT DETECT US...YET. YOU MUST FOLLOW ME--INTO DREAM-TIME.

BUT THE OTHER HEROES HAVE SO MUCH MORE POWER--!

DREAM-TIME IS OVERWHELM-ING TO THE UNITIATED.

THEY WOULD NEED TIME TO ADJUST--WHERE-AS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED IT FULLY BEFORE.*

AND IT IS YOUR STRENGTH OF WILL WHICH ALLOWED YOU TO COPE IN DREAM-TIME--

*CONTEST #1.

--THAT WILL ALSO ENABLE YOU TO RETAIN A HOLD ON YOUR SANITY WHEN YOU CONFRONT...THE *UNKNOWN!*

I-I'VE FEARED HER SINCE I FIRST SET EYES ON HER!

NOW, MAY HEAVEN HELP ME, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT...

...WHY!?!

HER BODY WRACKED WITH UNEXPLAINABLE TREMBLING, THE DISTAFF MEMBER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR SUM-MONS ALL HER COURAGE--

--AND, TEARING BACK THE UNKNOWN'S COWL, REVEALS THE GRINNING FEATURES OF... DEATH!

COLD-- SO COLD!

HER HORRIFIC APPEARANCE MAGNIFIED BY THE HALLUCINOGENIC EFFECTS OF DREAM-TIME, DEATH FILLS THE ASSEMBLED HEROES WITH FEAR OF HER PRESENCE!

THE UNKNOWN IS NOW KNOWN.

YES, THE UNKNOWN IS *DEATH*. WHO ELSE COULD HOLD ALL YOU HEROES--AND YOUR WORLD--IN THRALL...

--THAN ONE WHOSE DOMINION EXTENDS OVER ALL?

AND *YOU*, GRANDMASTER--DID YOU KNOW YOUR OPPONENT TO BE THE GRIMMEST GAMESMAN OF THEM ALL?

OF COURSE! WHO ELSE COULD POSSESS THE POWER TO RESURRECT AN IMMORTAL?

STILL, THE HUMAN'S FEARS ARE WARRANTED.

I NEGLECTED TO TELL YOU, GRANDMASTER, THAT THE GOLDEN GLOBE IS BUT AN EMPTY INSTRUMENT. IT NEEDS A LIFE-FORCE TO ENERGIZE IT.

YES, IT CAN RESTORE THE COLLECTOR TO LIFE, PROVIDING THAT ONE OF EQUAL POWER *DIES* IN HIS PLACE. ONE SUCH AS *YOU*, GRANDMASTER.

THEN YOU HAVE MISREPRESENTED THE TERMS OF OUR CONTEST. YOU HAVE *CHEATED!*

DEATH NEVER CHEATS. MY RULES ARE MY OWN, AND ALL THE UNIVERSE MUST OBEY THEM.

YOU HAVE WON THE POWER TO RESTORE YOUR BROTHER, GRANDMASTER--THERE IS NO ONE TO SAY YOU MUST *USE* IT.

YET...SUCH WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE GAME!

I AM THE *GRANDMASTER!* NEVER--IN A THOUSAND GAMES ON A THOUSAND WORLDS--HAVE I QUIT THE TABLE ERE THE GAME WAS THROUGH!

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE, GRANDMASTER. AS I SAID, THE GOLDEN GLOBE *EXCHANGES* LIFE FOR LIFE.

IF YOU ARE UNWILLING TO SACRIFICE *YOURS*, THE COMBINED LIFE ENERGIES OF THESE ASSEMBLED EARTH HEROES SHOULD SUFFICE.

SUCH WAS NOT THE TERMS OF MY BARGAIN!

IN WINNING FOR ME, THEY HAVE ENSURED THAT NEVER AGAIN SHALL THE GRANDMASTER USE THEM OR THEIR WORLD AS PAWNS!

THE GRANDMASTER MUST PLAY BY HIS RULES...

...TO THE END!

*THERE IS A RIPPLE IN SPACE, A FLUX IN THE FLOW OF THE UNIVERSE...*

*...AND ONE ELDER GOD DIES TO BRING ABOUT THE REBIRTH OF ANOTHER!*

I...LIVE!?!

WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED HERE?!

THAT IS THE UNIFORM OF MY BROTHER IN THAT SMOLDERING PILE OF ASHES!

'TWAS YOUR DOING, DEATH! I'M CERTAIN! I WILL FORCE YOU TO RESTORE HIM...EVEN IF I MUST COLLECT EVERY HERO IN THE COSMOS TO FIGHT YOU!

YOU WOULD LOSE.

HOWEVER, I'M WILLING TO PLAY A GAME WITH YOU...

AND THE RULES, DEATH? WILL THEY BE THE SAME YOU USED TO TRICK MY BROTHER?

OF COURSE, COLLECTOR. WHEN YOU PLAY A GAME OF LIFE AND DEATH, MINE ARE THE *ONLY* RULES.

HAHAHAHAHAHA

*DEATH DEPARTS, TAKING THE COLLECTOR WITH HER...*

*IN THEIR WAKE, ALL THE HEROES OF EARTH ARE DISPERSED...*

*...THE ORBITING ARENA THAT HOUSED THEM COLLAPSES INTO NOTHINGNESS...*

*...AND THE EARTH ITSELF IS FREED FROM THE STASIS FIELD THAT HELD EVERY LIVING BEING IMMOBILE FOR THE DURATION OF THE GAME...*

*IN AVENGERS MANSION, LIKE ALL ACROSS THE FACE OF THE EARTH, HEROES FIND THEMSELVES EXACTLY WHERE THEY HAD BEEN BEFORE THEIR ABDUCTION...*

ULP!

UH, HOLD IT, GUYS! LOOK AT THE TIME. WE'VE BEEN GONE FOR ALMOST AN HOUR.

I KNOW IT'S A BIT TACKY, CONSIDERING WHAT WE'VE JUST BEEN THROUGH, BUT I *DID* MANAGE TO ELUDE YOU FOR A MINUTE AS I WAGERED.*

**BACK IN CONTEST #1.*

BUT, YOU KNOW, IT'S GONNA BE A LONNNNG TIME BEFORE I FEEL LIKE PLAYING GAMES!

*THE AVENGERS STAND IN MUTE AGREEMENT, PONDERING THE **GRANDMASTER** ...A MAN WHOSE PASSION FOR GAMES KNEW NO BOUNDS...A MAN WHO GAMBLED TO THE VERY...END.*

# MARVEL SUPER HEROES-1982

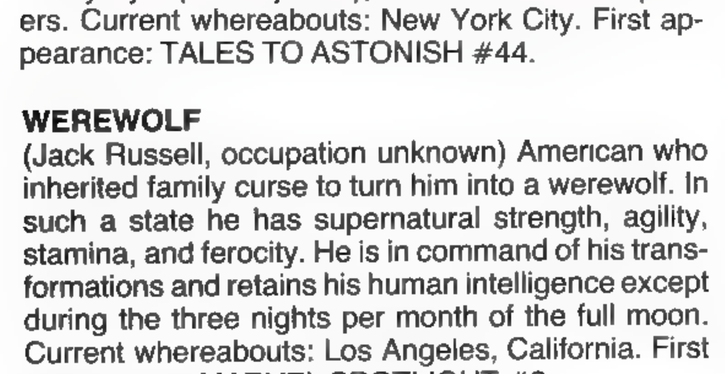
**CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE**

**WASP**
(Janet Van Dyne, heiress) American with the ability to shrink to insect-size and fly by means of surgically-implanted membrane-wings. Shoots a bio-electric "wasp's sting." Member of the Avengers. Ex-wife of Henry Pym (Yellowjacket), who concocted her powers. Current whereabouts: New York City. First appearance: TALES TO ASTONISH #44.

**WEREWOLF**
(Jack Russell, occupation unknown) American who inherited family curse to turn him into a werewolf. In such a state he has supernatural strength, agility, stamina, and ferocity. He is in command of his transformations and retains his human intelligence except during the three nights per month of the full moon. Current whereabouts: Los Angeles, California. First appearance: MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #2.

**WOLVERINE**
(Logan — , ex-soldier) Canadian mutant with great strength and agility, and the ability to heal very quickly. His bones were surgically reinforced with the steel-alloy Adamantium, and he was given retractable claws implanted in each hand. Member of the X-Men. Current whereabouts: Salem Center, New York. First appearance: HULK #181.

**WONDER MAN**
(Simon Williams, ex-industrialist, aspiring actor) American possessing enormous strength and near-invulnerability. The chemical processes of his metabolism have been replaced by some strange form of energy. Former member of the Avengers. Current whereabouts: Hollywood, California. First appearance: AVENGERS #8.



## INACTIVE SUPER HEROES

**BANSHEE**
(Sean Cassidy) Possessed sonic scream, ability to fly. Former member of X-Men. First appearance: X-MEN #28. Reason for retirement: loss of power.

**BIOTRON**
Humanoid robot from the Microversian planet of Homeworld. Former member of the Micronauts. First appearance: MICRONAUTS #1. Reason for retirement: was destroyed in MICRONAUTS #27.

**BLUE DIAMOND**
(Elton Morrow, anthropologist) American whose body could change to the density and strength of a diamond while still allowing mobility. Member of the Liberty Legion. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #29. Reason for retirement: changed to living diamond and went off into space with the Star-dancer.

**CRIMSON CAVALIER**
(Real name unknown) Frenchman who used a fencing foil against the Germans during World War I. Member of the Freedom's Five. First appearance: INVADERS #7. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**DESTROYER II**
(Roger Aubrey) Britisher who had developed great strength, agility, stamina and fighting skills. Active during World War II. Second person to use costume and name, first being Brian Falsworth (Union Jack II). First appearance (as Dyna-Mite): INVADERS #14. First appearance (as Destroyer): INVADERS #26. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**DOMINIC FORTUNE**
(David Fortunoff, adventurer) American with acrobatic abilities, fighting prowess. Carried a gun. Active in the 1930's. First appearance: MARVEL PREVIEW #2. Reason for retirement: old age.

**FIN**
(Real name unknown) American who used aquatic powers during World War II. First appearance: INVADERS #5. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age

**GHOST RIDER**
(Johnny Blaze, motorcycle stunt rider) American who through sorcery became the host-body for a blazing skeletal demon who is able to create objects out of mystic flame, project soul-scalding Hellfire, and is super-strong and nearly impervious to to harm. First appearance MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #5. Reason for retirement: Blaze is no longer able to control the demon and force him to use his powers for good.

**GIANT-MAN II**
(Bill Foster, physicist) Black American who could mentally stimulate growth in height and mass up to about twenty-five feet. First appearance (as Bill Foster): AVENGERS #32. First appearance (as Black Goliath): POWER MAN #24. First appearance (as Giant-Man): MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #55. Reason for retirement: radiation poisoning weakened body.

**GOLDEN GIRL**
(Gwenny Lou Sabuki) Japanese-American who possessed the ability to shoot solar beams from her hands, and fly. Member of the Kid Commandos. First appearance: INVADERS #28. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**GORILLA MAN**
(Ken Hale, occupation unknown) American who through African sorcery became a gorilla-creature with human intelligence. First appearance: WHAT IF #9. Reason for retirement: unknown.

**HUMAN ROBOT**
A humanoid robot created by an unnamed scientist in the 1950's who was reprogrammed by Marvel Boy's Uranian science to aid the cause of good. First appearance: WHAT IF #9. Reason for retirement: unknown

**HUMAN TOP**
(David Mitchell) Black American who had the ability to spin about in circles at incredible speeds. Member of the Kid Commandos. First appearance: INVADERS #28. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**JACK FROST**
(No alias known) Humanoid of unknown origin who could command cold and ice. Member of the Liberty Legion. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #29. Reason for retirement: unknown (whereabouts also unknown).

**MADAME MASQUE**
(Whitney Frost, ex-crime boss, alias Big M) American with no real super-powers who was briefly on the side of the law. First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #97. Reason for retirement: resumed criminal career.

**MAN-WOLF**
(John Jameson, astronaut) American who was transformed into a powerful humanoid wolf by means of an alien gem called the moonstone, which attached itself parasitically to his body. First appearance: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #124. Reason for retirement: the moonstone was surgically removed from Jameson's body in SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #3.

**MANTIS**
(Real name unknown) Vietnamese empath who had a great mastery of the martial arts. First appearance: AVENGERS #114. Reason for retirement: abandoned corporeal life to become Celestial Madonna.

**MODRED THE MYSTIC**
(No other name known) Twelfth Century Britisher who gained great sorcerous powers from the elder demon Chthon and went into suspended animation till the 20th Century. Though he tried to wield his powers in the cause of good, the power itself was derived from evil, and so Modred became a pawn of the demon. First appearance: MARVEL FEATURE #1. Reason for retirement: succumbed to evil and had his intellect reduced to child's level.

**MS. MARVEL**
(Carol Danvers, ex-security agent, freelance writer) American who possessed ability to fly, super-strength, heightened reflexes, and a precognitive Seventh Sense. Former member of the Avengers. First appearance: MS. MARVEL #1. Reason for retirement: loss of powers.

**NOVA**
(Richard Ryder, student) American who possessed super-strength and ability to fly. First appearance: NOVA #1. Reason for retirement: loss of powers.

**PATRIOT**
(Jeff Mace, reporter) American who used his natural athletic and fighting skills to battle crime. Member of the Liberty Legion. Became Captain America III following the original's presumed death in the late 1940's and was a member of the All-Winners Squad. First appearance (as the Patriot): MARVEL PREMIERE #29. First appearance (as Captain America III):WHAT IF #4. Reason for retirement: unknown

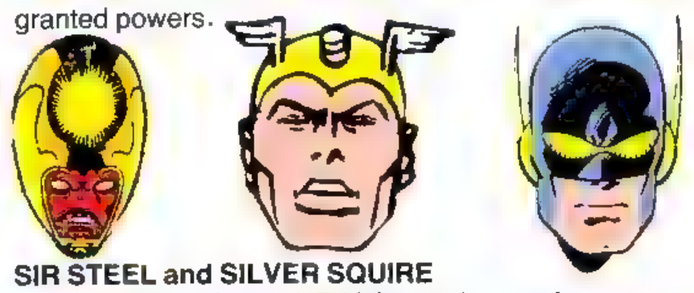
**PRESENSE**
(Sergei — , scientist) Russian mutant who gained vast cosmic powers through exposure to radiation. First appearance: DEFENDERS #52. Reason for retirement: left Earth to seek destiny.

**PROWLER**
(Hobie Brown, window washer) Black American who used various gimmicks to fight crime. First appearance: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #78. Reason for retirement: voluntarily gave up costumed identity to devote time to civilian life.

**RED GUARDIAN**
(Dr. Tania Belinski, neurosurgeon) Russian possessing great agility and martial skills. Used discuses as weapons. First appearance: DEFENDERS #35. Reason for retirement: left Earth to seek destiny with the Presense.

**SCARECROW**
A mysterious unearthly figure of vengeance who guarded the portal to a demonic dimension on the surface of an oil painting, and could come to life to battle demons. First appearance: DEAD OF NIGHT #11. Reason for retirement: the oil painting was destroyed, sealing the portal between dimensions in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #18.

**SCARLET SCARAB**
(Abdul Faoul, archeologist) Egyptian who possessed an ancient power-object granting him abilities of flight, strength, and energy-blasts. First appearance: INVADERS #23. Reason for retirement: loss of scarab that granted powers.



**SIR STEEL and SILVER SQUIRE**
(Real names unknown) Britishers who used armor and swords to fight the Germans during World War I. Members of the Freedom's Five. First appearance: INVADERS #7. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**SPITFIRE**
(Jacqueline Falsworth-Chrichton) Britisher who possessed the power of flight and heat rays. Member of the Invaders. First appearance: INVADERS #12. Reason for retirement: fading powers with old age.

**THIN MAN**
(Bruce Dickson, scientist) American who gained the ability to flatten his body to the width of paper. Member of the Liberty Legion. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #29. Reason for retirement: (presumably) old age.

**TWO-GUN KID**
(Matt Hawk, gunslinger) Nineteenth Century American who donned mask and six-shooters to battle the lawless. Briefly came to the Twentieth Century via time machine. First appearance: TWO-GUN KID #1. Reason for retirement: returned to his own time.

**WHITE TIGER**
(Hector Ayala, student) Puerto Rican who used mystic amulets to grant heightened strength, speed, agility, and fighting ability. First appearance: DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #22. Reason for retirement: loss of amulets granting power.

**WHIZZER**
(Robert Frank, nuclear plant worker) American who gained the power of super-speed. Member of the Liberty Legion and Invaders. First appearance: GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #1. Reason for retirement: old age (heart condition).

**WRAITH**
(Brian DeWolff, ex-policeman) American with telepathic and psychokinetic powers. Carries guns. Status as hero questionable. First appearance: MARVEL TEAM-UP #48. Reason for retirement: unknown.

**YELLOWJACKET**
(Henry Pym, biochemist, cyberneticist) American who invented serum enabling him to reduce to insect-size. Used bioelectric "stings." Former husband to Janet Van Dyne (Wasp). First appearance (as Dr. Pym): TALES TO ASTONISH #27. First appearance (as Ant-Man): TALES TO ASTONISH #35. First appearance (as Giant-Man): TALES TO ASTONISH #49. First appearance (as Goliath): AVENGERS #28. First appearance (as Yellowjacket): AVENGERS #59. Reason for retirement: began criminal career.

# HONOR ROLL OF THE DECEASED

**ADAM WARLOCK**
(Formerly called "Him") An artificial human being created to be "perfect," capable of harnessing cosmic energy to fly and shoot power-blasts. Later gained a symbiotic soul-gem which stole the souls of living beings, thus killing their bodies. First appearance (as Him): FANTASTIC FOUR #66. First appearance (as Adam Warlock): POWER OF WARLOCK #1. Died by cosmic suicide in AVENGERS ANNUAL #7.

**BLOODSTONE**
(Ulysses Bloodstone, adventurer) Primitve human who got strange energy blood-gem lodged in his chest, conferring upon him immortality. Had no real super-powers, carried guns and other weapons. First appearance: MARVEL PRESENTS #1. Died in battle in RAMPAGING HULK #8.

**BUCKY**
(Bucky Barnes, army mascot) American who trained himself athletically and in fighting skills. Partner to Captain America, member of the Invaders and Kid Commandos. Died trying to dismantle a bomb, as told in AVENGERS #4. First appearance: AVENGERS #4.

**CAPTAIN MARVEL**
(Mar-Vell, captain in Kree militia) Alien humanoid of the Kree Empire who had superhuman strength and fighting skills, photonic powers enabling him to fly, and a zen-like "cosmic awareness" which enabled him to perceive things extrasensorily. First appearance: MARVEL SUPER-HEROES #12. Died from cancer in THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL graphic novel.

**CRIMEBUSTER**
(Frank — ) American who used various weapons and devices to battle crime. Son of the Comet. First appearance: NOVA #13 Died battling the alien Skrulls, as told in ROM #24.

**IT, THE LIVING COLOSSUS**
A thirty-foot stone statue animated telepathically by wheelchair-bound Bob O'Bryan. First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #14. The statue was demolished by the Hulk in HULK #224.

**MARVEL BOY**
(Robert Grayson) American who used power-bands from the planet Uranus to fly and dazzle his opponents. These power-bands were later used to better effect by Quasar. First appearance (as Crusader): FANTASTIC FOUR #164. Died by an energy overload in FANTASTIC FOUR #165

**MIMIC**
(Calvin Rankin) American who gained the ability to duplicate the powers of any super-being nearby. Former member of the X-Men. First appearance: X-MEN #19. Died from an overdose of gamma radiation in HULK #161.

**MISS AMERICA**
(Madeline Joyce Frank) American who possessed the powers of flight and super-strength. Wife of the Whizzer. First appearance: MARVEL PREMIERE #29. Died from complications during childbirth, as told in GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #1.

**OMEGA THE UNKNOWN**
(Real name unknown) A humanoid "organic robot" from an unspecified planet trained to be a perfect warrior. Possessed super-strength, enabling him to leap long distances, etc. Had empathic link with another organic robot, James-Michael Starling. First appearance: OMEGA #1. Died from a gunshot wound in OMEGA #10.

**PHANTOM EAGLE**
(Real name unknown) American air pilot who fought during World War I. Member of the Freedom's Five. First appearance: MARVEL SUPER-HEROES #16. Died in battle and lived on as a ghost, as told in GHOST RIDER #12.

**PHOENIX**
(Jean Grey, student) American mutant with psionic powers of telepathy and psychokinesis, who tapped into an incredible cosmic energy manifestation shaped like a fiery bird. Member of the X-Men. First appearance (as Marvel Girl): X-MEN #1. First appearance (as Phoenix): X-MEN #101. Died by cosmic suicide in X-MEN #137.

**RED RAVEN**
(Real name unknown) American given pair of anti-gravity wings by humanoid Bird-men. Member of the Liberty Legion. First appearance: X-MEN # 44. Died in an explosion in SUB-MARINER #26.

**SPIRIT OF '76**
(Real name unknown) American who used his fighting prowess and bulletproof cloak during World War II. Became the second Captain America briefly after 1945 when the original was presumed dead. First appearance: INVADERS #14. Died in battle, as told in WHAT IF #4.

**SWORDSMAN**
(Real name unknown) American with great natural agility and fighting skill who became a master of the broadsword. Used an energy-shooting sword from time to time. Former member of the Avengers. First appearance: AVENGERS #19. Died in battle in GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #4 but lived briefly as a ghost. Joined Mantis, the Celestial Madonna, in cosmic union after death.

**THUNDERBIRD**
(John Proudstar) American Indian mutant with great agility, strength and speed. Member of the X-Men. First appearance: GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1. Died in plane crash in X-MEN #95

**THUNDERBOLT**
(Bill Carver, assistant district attorney) Black American who possessed the power of super-speed. First appearance: POWER MAN #41. Died of accelerated old age in POWER MAN/IRON FIST #62

**TORO**
(Toro Raymond) American with the ability to burst on fire, fly, throw fireballs. Member of the Invaders and the Kid Commandos. First appearance: SUB-MARINER #14. Died in battle in SUB-MARINER #14.

**UNION JACK I**
(Lord Falsworth) Britisher who used his athletic and fighting skills to battle the Germans in World War I. Member of the Freedom's Five and the Invaders. First appearance: INVADERS #7. Died of old age in CAPTAIN AMERICA #254.

**UNION JACK II**
(Brian Falsworth) Britisher who used his athletic and fighting skills in World War II, first as the original Destroyer, then carrying on in his father's tradition as Union Jack. Member of the Invaders. Died in an automobile accident, as told in CAPTAIN AMERICA #253.

**ZURAS**
(Name in own language unknown) Eternal possessing the powers of levitation, molecular manipulation and energy beams. He was also the conduit by which the Eternals formed the ritual collective organism, the Uni-Mind. Father to Thena. First appearance: ETERNALS #5. Died in battle with the Celestials in THOR #300.

## SUPER HEROES OF OTHER WORLDS, OTHER TIMES

**AMERICAN EAGLE** (Squadron Supreme)
**ARKON** the Imperial
**ASTRA** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**BALDER** (god of Asgard)
**CAP'N HAWK** (Squadron Supreme)
**CENTURION** (Rhomann Dey of Xandar)
**CHARLIE 27** (Guardians of the Galaxy)
**CHO'D** (Starjammers)
**CORSAIR** (Starjammers)
**DEATHLOK** (1990's)
**DOCTOR SPECTRUM** (Squadron Supreme)
**EARTHQUAKE** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**FANDRAL** (Warriors Three of Asgard)
**FANG** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**FIREFALL** of Galador
**GLADIATOR** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**GOLDEN ARCHER** (Squadron Supreme)
**HEPZIBAH** (Starjammers)
**HOBGOBLIN** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**HOGUN** (Warriors Three of Asgard)
**HORUS** (Falcon-god of Heliopolis)
**HUSSAR** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**HYDRO-MAN** (Squadron Supreme)
**HYPERION** (Squadron Supreme)
**IMMORTUS**, Lord of Limbo
**IMPOSSIBLE MAN** of Poppup
**IMPET** (wife of Impossible Man)
**JAVELIN** of Galador
**KILLRAVEN** (2010's)
**LADY LARK** (Squadron Supreme)
**MANTA** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**MARTINEX** (Guardians of the Galaxy)
**MENTOR** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**MERCURIO** the 4-D Man
**NIKKI** (Guardians of the Galaxy)
**ORACLE** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**PRESTER JOHN**
**PROTECTOR** (Prime Thoran of Xandar)
**RAZA** (Starjammers)
**RECORDER** (Rigellian robot)
**ROCKET RACOON**
**SIF** (goddess of Asgard)
**SMASHER** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**STARBOLT** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**STARHAWK** (Guardians of the Galaxy)
**STARSHINE** of Galador (deceased)
**TEMPEST** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**TOM THUMB** (Squadron Supreme)
**VANCE ASTRO** (Guardians of the Galaxy)
**VOLSTAGG** (Warriors Three of Asgard)
**WARSTAR** (Imperial Guard of Shi'Ar)
**WHIZZER** (Squadron Supreme)
**YONDU** (Guardians of the Galaxy)

## QUASI-HEROES

**AGATHA HARKNESS** of New Salem
**ALPHA** the Ultimate Mutant
**BLADE** (Vampire Killer)
**CLOAK**
**COMBATRA** (Shogun Warriors)
**DAGGER**
**DANGARD ACE** (Shogun Warriors)
**DAUGHTERS OF THE DRAGON**
**DOC SAVAGE**
**DOMO** (Eternals)
**FUTURIST** (Dr. Randolph James)
**GABRIEL** the Exorcist
**GLORIAN**, Herald of the Shaper
**GOLEM**
**HIGH EVOLUTIONARY** (deceased)
**HOWARD THE DUCK**
**HUMAN FLY**
**IRIDIA** (Inhumans)
**JANN OF THE JUNGLE**
**JANUS**, Son of Dracula
**KARTHON THE QUESTOR** of Lemuria
**MAN-THING**, Guardian of the Nexus
**MURDOCH ADAMS** (Monster Hunter)
**NAMORA** of Atlantis (deceased)
**NICK FURY** Director of SHIELD
**PIP THE TROLL** (deceased)
**PUNISHER**
**RAYDEEN** (Shogun Warriors)
**RICK JONES**
**SKULL THE SLAYER**
**SONS OF THE TIGER**
**STUNTMASTER**
**VALKIN** (Eternal)
**WOODGOD**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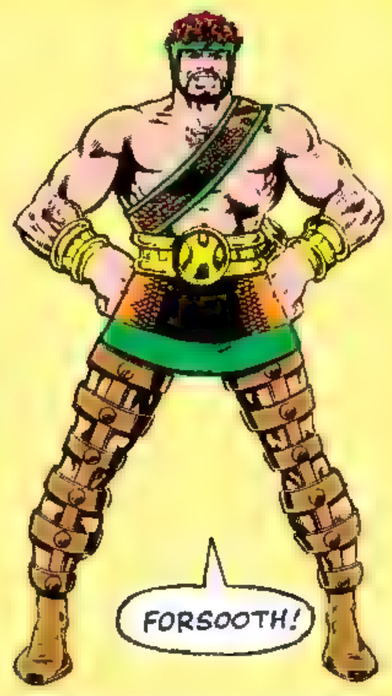
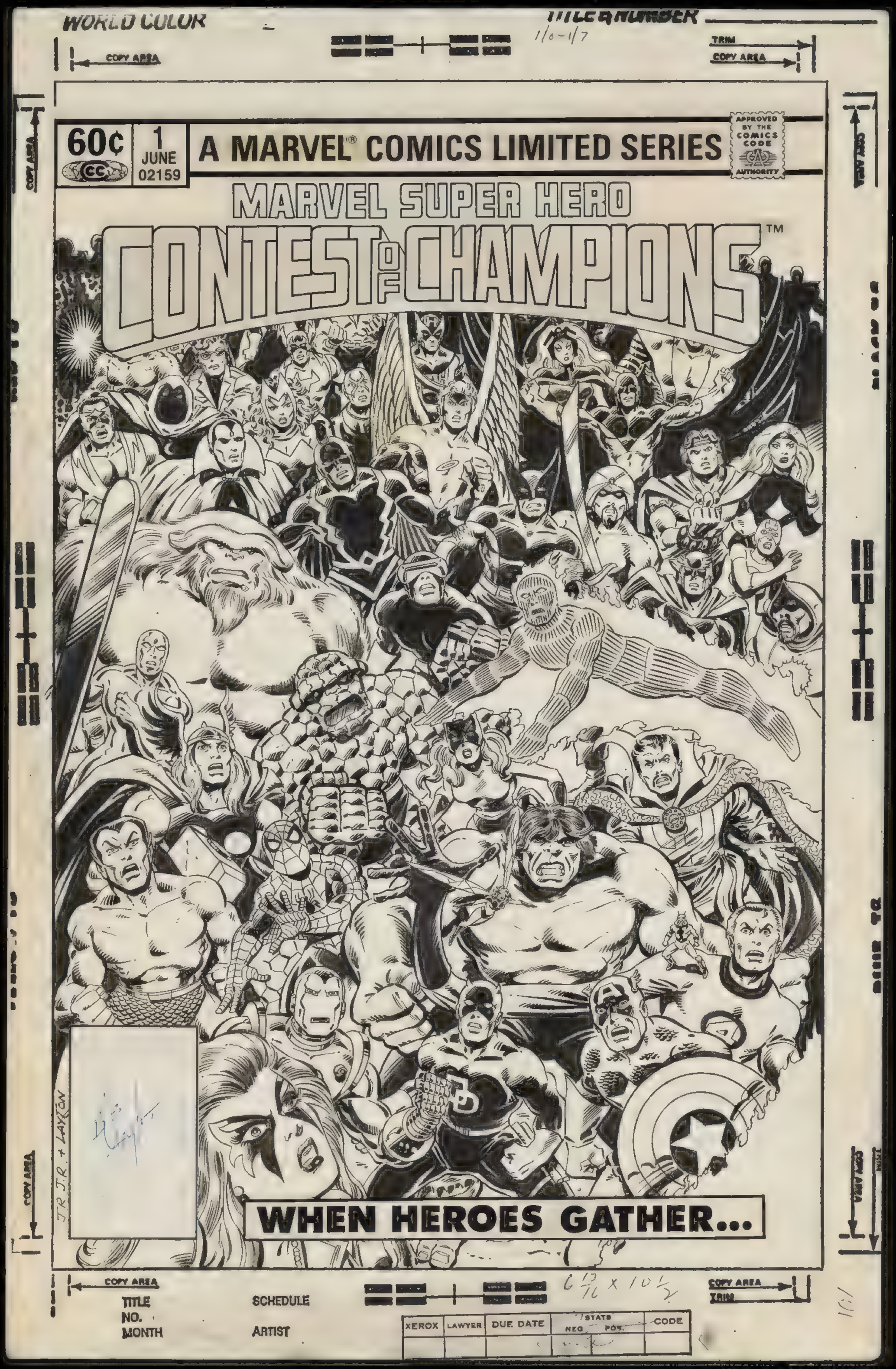


*Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions* #1 cover original art
by John Romita Jr. & Bob Layton




Courtesy David Mandel

*Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions* #1 house ad
featured in July 1982 titles

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# INTRODUCTION

## BY TOM DEFALCO

### (FROM *CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS* TPB, 1999)

You ever have one those days? You know the kind I mean. You wake up late because you forgot to set the clock radio. The person before you uses all the hot water, leaving you to shiver in the shower. Your shoelace breaks as you rush to get dressed. Coffee splashes over your new outfit. Your bus is late, and your boss earlier.

Yeah, one of those days!

*Contest of Champions* was one of those assignments.

This limited series holds a very special place in comic book history. It marks the very first time that all the super heroes of one comic book company ever gathered to fight a common foe. Sure, most companies regularly teamed up their most popular heroes. Teams like DC's Justice Society of America and Marvel's All-Winners Squad first appeared in the 1940s, and their Justice League and Avengers counterparts are still being published today.

*Contest* was something new. It was the most ambitious project of its day. *Secret Wars*, *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, and countless other company-wide crossovers all followed the template established by *Contest*.

Cool, huh?

Except *Contest* was never supposed to be a limited comic book series.

I wasn't actually there for the first part of the story, but here's the way I heard it. *Contest* was originally conceived as a tie-in for the 1980 Olympics, and was designed to be published as a single *Marvel Treasury Edition*. (One of those 10-by-13-inch giant comic books that the major companies used to publish. Look around your favorite back issue store, and you might find one. It'll be worth your effort. They're a real treat!)

Sometime during 1979, writers Mark Gruenwald, Bill Mantlo and Steven Grant brainstormed the basic plot for the story you're about to read. Young John Romita Jr., who was just starting his artistic career, was assigned to pencil the job, and Pablo Marcos was handling the inking chores. (I'm afraid I don't know who the book's original editor was.)

Production immediately began on the book, and the pages started flowing. Everything was going just fine.

Until the United States pulled out of the 1980 Olympics.

Since the country was boycotting the Olympics, the powers that be decided it didn't make a lot of sense to publish a tie-in. *Contest* was cancelled.

Sort of.

Nobody told Pablo.

Living somewhere in South America at the time, Pablo had the forty or so penciled pages that JR Jr. had already completed. Since no one was hassling him for the pages, he worked on them in his spare time. He'd occasionally ask about them, be told there was no hurry, and put them aside to work on a more pressing assignment.

Two years passed.

It was now 1981. By this time, I had become an editor at Marvel and Mark Gruenwald had been assigned as my assistant.

We were in our office one day when Pablo showed up with his forty odd pages, and asked when he'd receive the end of the job.

I had no idea what he was talking about. Mark not only did, but he immediately realized how we could exploit those pages.

Racing to Jim Shooter, who was Marvel's editor-in-chief at the time, Mark proposed that we break the story into three parts and publish it as a limited series. Jim quickly agreed.

Mark called Bill, who immediately made the necessary adjustments to the plot, and then we somehow conned JR into finishing it.

Sounds simple, no?

Unfortunately, *Contest* was one of those assignments. As we started to prepare the first issue of this limited series, we realized that a lot of changes had occurred in the Marvel Universe between 1979 and 1981. Costumes had been redesigned, new characters had been added, and teams had different members.

And so we started the long task of making the necessary corrections. The very long task!

Heck, that series had so many art adjustments that we felt compelled to give Babyface Bob Layton, the guy who made most of them, a special credit.

I told you it was one of those assignments.

The first issue eventually went off to the printer.

We were midway through the second issue when I was struck by a very terrible and personal tragedy.

Jim Shooter decided to make Mark a full editor.

Don't get me wrong! I thought Mark's promotion was long overdue. I was convinced he'd become one of the greatest comic book editors of all time. (And I was right!)

But I certainly didn't want to get stuck with *Contest*. It was one of those assignments.

Lucky for me, Mark had grown very attached to *Contest* and asked if I'd let him edit the final issue.

Sure!

No problem!

Be my guest!

I couldn't ditch it fast enough.

Mark supervised the last issue, made all the final corrections, gave me a copy to proofread, got my okay, and sent the comic to the printer.

End of story, right?

Not quite.

(SPOILER WARNING: If you haven't already read *Contest*, you'd better do so before reading further because I'm about to reveal some major story points.)

For reasons that befuddled me, the final issue of *Contest* seemed to generate an exceptional amount of mail. It didn't make any sense. The series was over. We had no place to publish such letters. Why were people writing?

The answer came one day when Jim Shooter invited Mark and me into his office.

Jim was holding all three issues of *Contest*, and he wasn't smiling.

Seems we screwed up.

The Grandmaster had won the first round of the contest.

The Unknown had taken the second.

The third went to the Grandmaster.

And the fourth ended when Shamrock touched the golden globe. The copy on the final page read, "Final score: Grandmaster – 3, Unknown – 1."

It appeared that the Grandmaster had won.

But Shamrock was on the Unknown's team.

The game was actually a tie and neither Mark nor I had realized it.

Jim was not pleased. He asked us what we were going to do about it. I, of course, had no idea. Mark not only did, but he immediately informed Jim that the mistake was put in deliberately to set up a sequel.

(I don't think Jim ever fell for that line, but *Contest* had certainly sold well enough to deserve a sequel so he approved it on the spot.)

Mark volunteered to call Bill and John, and I sighed with relief. I was finally through with *Contest*.

Not quite.

For various reasons, Bill and John could never find time in their busy schedules to do the promised sequel.

Years passed.

I had forgotten all about it until one afternoon when Mark dropped by the office. He informed me that he was finally going to wrap up *Contest* in the two *Avengers* Annuals that were scheduled to be published in 1987. Steve Englehart was the regular writer of *West Coast Avengers* and would write the first half, but Mark needed someone for part two.

Since I shared equal blame for the initial screwup, that happy task was dropped on me.

Fine!

Be that way!

Okay!

To my surprise, this particular writing assignment, which included six art teams (a sure recipe for disaster if I ever heard one), went without a hitch.

I had a truly great time working with Englehart and all the art teams, and the book was published without a single problem.

*Contest* had suddenly become a real pleasure.

At least until I received a flood of mail protesting my characterization of Hawkeye at the end of the tale. (People also objected to Captain America's final line about his bow-toting buddy.)

What can I say? I thought Hawk's final solution fit his personality. I still do. You, however, are free to disagree.

Anyway, at long last, it seemed like *Contest* was finally out of my life.

At least until Polly Watson asked me to write this introduction.

What more can I say?

I told you it was one of those assignments.

**— Tom DeFalco**
**1999**

*Contest of Champions* TPB (1999) cover
by Pepe Moreno

Reprinting *Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions* #1-3, *The West Coast Avengers Annual* #2 and *The Avengers Annual* #16

# BIOGRAPHIES

## BILL MANTLO

From the mid-'70s through the late-'80s, Bill Mantlo established himself as one of the most dedicated writers in the comics industry, writing hundreds of stories across dozens of titles, primarily for Marvel Comics.

Mantlo broke into comics as a colorist, but it wasn't long before he was given a crack at writing a fill-in story, a "Sons of the Tiger" story in the black-and-white *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu* magazine, and his true comics talent began to emerge. The quality of his work led to his installation as that book's regular writer, a tenure that included the notable achievement of introducing comics' first Puerto Rican hero, the White Tiger.

After achieving notoriety within the Marvel offices as a guy who could knock out credible fill-in scripts at a moment's notice, Mantlo was given more regular work. One early highlight was his 20-issue tenure on *Iron Man* that began the Golden Avenger's return to prominence. As one might expect from someone with such a volume of work, Mantlo was game to take on projects others dismissed, and he did it with an unfeigned aplomb that elevated the work.

It was on two licensed titles that Mantlo built his legacy. Inspired by a toy given to his son at Christmas, Mantlo lobbied Marvel to adapt Micronauts into an ongoing series. The award-winning epic he spun with artistic luminaries like Michael Golden and Pat Broderick is still highly revered by comics fandom as is his even longer run on *Rom*, wherein he developed a universe filled with Spaceknights, Dire Wraith monsters and outer space intrigue. Other notable credits in Mantlo's career include *Incredible Hulk*, *Alpha Flight* and *Spectacular Spider-Man*.

Just as Mantlo had begun a new career as a public defender with the New York City Legal Aid Society, he was struck by a hit-and-run driver and went into a weeks-long coma from severe head trauma. He has since been under constant medical care. The comics community has led multiple fundraisers to aid in the continuing care of a talented writer who is missed by his many fans.

## SAL BUSCEMA

Without a doubt one of comics' most prolific artists, "Our Pal" Sal Buscema joined Marvel in 1968 shortly after his elder brother, John. Tackling inking duties on *Silver Surfer* and *Fantastic Four*, including the all-time classic *Silver Surfer* #4, Buscema quickly graduated to penciling. He was an anchor of the Marvel line in the 1970s with long runs on books like *Captain America*, *Marvel Team-Up* and *The Spectacular Spider-Man* and a 100-plus issue run on *The Incredible Hulk*. Buscema was also behind defining the tone on early issues of *The Defenders*, *Rom* and *The New Mutants*. His career as one of Marvel's most versatile artists lasted throughout the '70s and into the '90s. In 1988, he returned to *The Spectacular Spider-Man* and over the next ten years penciled every issue but two from #134 through #238 (and inked the vast majority as well!) Although he retired in the late '90s, readers can still see his name on comics credits from time to time, including inking work on the cult hit *Spider-Girl*.

## RICH BUCKLER

Rich Buckler, along with John Buscema and George Pérez, helped define the '70s era of Marvel's flagship title, *Fantastic Four*. His dynamic style and muscular figurework carried on the tradition set by Jack Kirby. Buckler's first published artwork was a backup in King Feature's 1967 *Flash Gordon* #10, and in 1970 he landed work on Warren's *Eerie* and *Creepy* horror magazines. After illustrating a few backup stories at DC Comics, he turned to Marvel for his first feature work. By 1973, he was turned loose on *Fantastic Four* and other Marvel ongoing series like *Jungle Action* (featuring Black Panther) and *Astonishing Tales*, in which he and writer Doug Moench launched Deathlok the Demolisher. The post-apocalyptic story of Col. Luther Manning, their run on "Deathlok" was a defining vision of a future gone wrong. Its influence and themes of military rule, reanimation and killer cyborgs would be reflected in films from *The Terminator* to *RoboCop*. After a time with DC, where he teamed with Roy Thomas on *All-Star Squadron*, Buckler returned to Marvel for work on *Spectacular Spider-Man*, *New Mutants* and a return engagement with *Fantastic Four* in the late '90s when he collaborated with writers such as Steve Englehart and Walt Simonson. Buckler also had a thriving career outside comics as a surrealist painter. He passed away in 2017 after a battle with cancer.

## JO DUFFY

Like a lot of fans who would later turn pro, Jo Duffy first gained notice at Marvel by writing countless letters to her favorite comics. Her ardent fandom was memorialized in a 1977 issue of *Iron Man*, in which she was depicted in a throng of autograph hounds at San Diego Comic-Con. She was hired at Marvel that same year by then-editor-in-chief Archie Goodwin as a proofreader, but would soon work her way up the editorial ranks, presiding over titles including *Doctor Strange*, *ROM*, *Savage She-Hulk* and *Daredevil*, which coincided with the arrival of Frank Miller as penciler. Miller described Duffy as his "guardian angel," mentoring him as an artist and writer. In 1982, Duffy would join Goodwin for the launch of Marvel's creator-owned Epic imprint, where she helped launch Steve Englehart and Steve Leialoha's *Coyote* and Jim Starlin's *Dreadstar*. An ardent fan of manga, Duffy spent years lobbying to bring Japanese titles to Marvel, and in 1988 it paid off with Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira*. This seminal, long-running series opened the door to the North American market for manga, and Duffy herself adapted the scripts. Among Duffy's other writing credits were long stints on *Star Wars* and *Power Man and Iron Fist*, the mutant miniseries *Fallen Angels*, the toy tie-in series *The Saga of Crystar: Crystal*

*Warrior* and several issues of *Speedball* and *Wolverine*. She also wrote the graphic novel *The Punisher: Assassin's Guild*. At DC, she scripted a pair of Batman stories and wrote the first fourteen issues of the 1993 *Catwoman* series. In 2002, Duffy teamed with Kurt Busiek to script the series *The Order*, which reunited the classic lineup of the Defenders.

## STEVEN GRANT

A self-described "accidental" comic book writer, Steven Grant dabbled in comics writing in the early '70s for indie imprints before getting work as a music and film critic for newspapers in his hometown of Madison, Wisconsin. He kept in touch with his comics-loving associates in the CPL Gang, who urged him to go further in the comics industry. A 1976 meeting with Marvel editor Marv Wolfman didn't yield any opportunities, but while visiting CPL pal Roger Stern in 1979 opportunity struck. Stern, an editor newly ensconced at Marvel, offered Grant a gig writing an issue of *Marvel Two-In-One* that was running late. After turning in his script for the Thing/Moon Knight team-up, more work came his way as he helped Stern get his titles back on schedule. His first regular gigs were Spider-Man's adventures in *Marvel Team-Up* and the young readers book *Spidey Super Stories*. Grant also wrote issues of *Spider-Woman*, *Incredible Hulk*, *Battlestar Galactica*, and he co-wrote the *Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions* limited series. One of his biggest projects was scribing the *Life of Pope John Paul II* one-shot in 1983. That same year he launched his own character, Whisper, for Capital Comics and then First Comics, and was handed the reins to *American Flagg!* by its creator Howard Chaykin. In 1986, Grant made a huge splash with artist Mike Zeck on their *Punisher* miniseries. The fan-favorite series ignited the Punisher's popularity, raising him to the ranks of one of Marvel's most popular characters. Grant followed up with the acclaimed *Punisher: Return to Big Nothing* graphic novel and turns on *Punisher War Journal*, *Punisher War Zone* and the ongoing *Punisher* series. He branched out to DC in the '90s, rebooting *Challengers of the Unknown* and *Manhunter*. Grant's series *2 Guns*, published by BOOM! Studios, was adapted into a 2013 film starring Denzel Washington and Mark Wahlberg.

## MARK GRUENWALD

Few can lay claim to the influence that Mark Gruenwald had on Marvel as an editor, writer and artist during the 1980s and '90s. Born in 1953 in Wisconsin, Gruenwald's love of comics manifested in a fanzine titled *Omniverse*, which led to writing articles for the DC-published fanzine *Amazing World of DC Comics*. In 1978, he was hired by Jim Shooter to serve as an assistant editor at Marvel. In addition, Gruenwald also scripted several titles. He was ongoing writer of *Spider-Woman* in 1978-79, he kicked off a long run co-scripting *Marvel Two-In-One* with the "Project Pegasus" arc, and he co-wrote a handful of stories in *What If?* and *Thor*. Early in his career, Gruenwald also penciled a number of titles, including issues of *Questprobe*, *Incredible Hulk* and *Marvel Team-Up*. His major art credit was drawing the 1983 *Hawkeye* miniseries, which he also scripted.

A well-known continuity hound and office jokester, Gruenwald gave T-shirts emblazoned with the catchphrase "Continuity or Bust" to his office peers. His deep love of the Marvel mythos didn't stop with T-shirts. As a writer, he delved deep into Marvel's past with his "Untold Tales of the Marvel Universe" backup stories in *What If?*, as well as the secret origin of the High Evolutionary in the 1989 "Evolutionary War" event. Gruenwald's biggest achievement in grappling with the encyclopedic history of Marvel was his development of *The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe*, a series compiling the backgrounds of virtually every Marvel character. Eager fans devoured *OHOTMU*, and the series' success led to multiple sequels and updates that continue today.

Gruenwald's biggest accomplishment as a writer came with *Captain America*, a title which he wrote for an astonishing 137-issue run from 1985-1995. He also kicked off long runs on *Quasar* and the New Universe title *D.P. 7*. His critically acclaimed magnum opus, *Squadron Supreme*, a 12-issue miniseries, reestablished the alternate-reality Marvel team. When Tom DeFalco was named editor-in-chief in 1988, Gruenwald became his second-in-command with the title of executive editor. As an editor, he worked closely to mentor young writers, bringing an unforgettable sense of fun to the deadline slog. Tragically, Gruenwald passed away in 1996 due to an unknown heart ailment. In his will, he requested his ashes be mixed with ink used in the first printing of the *Squadron Supreme* trade paperback.

## RICK LEONARDI

As soon as Rick Leonardi graduated from Dartmouth College in 1979, he sent Marvel and DC a self-written and -drawn comic book that spoke to his artistic potential. Marvel wrote back, encouraging him to take a job with them. In his first years in comics, Leonardi eased himself into the business with a handful of stories in *Thor* and *The Spectacular Spider-Man*. After proving himself, he landed a pair of higher-profile gigs with writer Bill Mantlo on the 1982 miniseries *The Vision and the Scarlet Witch* and *Cloak and Dagger*. After penciling issues of *The Amazing Spider-Man*—and being a part of the development of Spider-Man's new black costume with Mike Zeck—Leonardi reunited with Mantlo to launch an ongoing *Cloak and Dagger* series in 1985. He followed that up with Marvel's top-selling X-titles, drawing a Colossus serial in *Marvel Comics Presents* and several issues of *The Uncanny X-Men* and *The New Mutants*. In 1992, Leonardi and Peter David created Miguel O'Hara in *Spider-Man 2099*, a series Leonardi would draw for most of the first 25 issues of its run. In the late '90s, Leonardi drew the five-issue series *Painkiller Jane* for Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti's Event Comics, and in the 2000s, he would head to DC for stints with *Batgirl*, *Vigilante* and *Nightwing*. A longtime fan of Batman, Leonardi's most recent project is the ongoing series *Batman Beyond*.

## FRANK MILLER

One of the boldest voices of a generation that pushed American comics into new creative and literary frontiers, Frank Miller broke into comics in 1978 illustrating stories in *Twilight Zone*, *Weird War Tales* and *John Carter, Warlord of Mars*. A Will Eisner acolyte ready to challenge the mainstream, Miller quickly moved on from short stories and single issues. With only his fifth Marvel credit, he took over as penciler on *Daredevil*. Teamed with inker/colorist Klaus Janson, Miller developed a dark and gritty world that brought the series back to its Hell's Kitchen roots. Miller's *Daredevil* was revolutionary, reintroducing pulp and crime genre elements into comics. Eleven issues into his run, Miller took over as writer and introduced the Greek assassin/love interest Elektra, who grew to become a major character in her own right.

As his *Daredevil* tenure came to a close in 1982, Miller penciled Wolverine's first solo series before moving to DC for the creator-owned *Ronin*. He returned to *Daredevil* in 1986 as writer of the acclaimed "Born Again" with artist David Mazzucchelli. Meanwhile, Miller was also making history at DC. He reunited with Janson to write and draw the landmark graphic novel *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. Depicting the resurgence of a retired, middle-aged Batman, *Dark Knight* pulled no punches in exploring the character and the era's politics. The resultant acclaim brought new literary regard to the medium and Miller's take still influences the character today. Miller returned to the Daredevil mythos again by scribing the *Daredevil: Love and War* graphic novel and *Elektra: Assassin*, both painted by Bill Sienkiewicz.

After writing the seminal origin story *Batman: Year One*, Miller began a relationship with the upstart independent publisher Dark Horse. There, he wrote *Hard Boiled*, *Give Me Liberty*, *Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot* and *RoboCop vs. The Terminator*, which parlayed from his scriptwriting the *RoboCop 2* and *RoboCop 3* movie sequels. He also launched his crime series *Sin City* in *Dark Horse Presents*, which Miller has since co-directed with Robert Rodriguez in two feature film adaptations. In the meantime, Miller again revisited Marvel and Daredevil with the *Elektra Lives Again* graphic novel and the five-issue origin retelling *Daredevil: The Man Without Fear*. Miller's success at the movies with *Sin City* led to his graphic novel *300* being adapted into a blockbuster, and he also directed *The Spirit*. A recent return to DC resulted in *Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again* and *All Star Batman & Robin, the Boy Wonder*. At the 2015 Eisner Awards, Miller was inducted into the Comic Book Hall of Fame.

## JOHN ROMITA JR.

Like his legendary father, John Romita Jr. has become a comic-art master, establishing a powerful style uniquely his own. His life in comics began early, when as an adolescent he helped his father design the Spider-Man villain the Prowler. His first published work—cover art for Marvel UK and "Chaos at the Coffee Bean!" in *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #11—showed that he'd learned much from his father's figure drawing and storytelling sense. His first full-length project was a KISS feature in *Marvel Super-Special* #5. In the summer of 1978, he began a years long parternship on *Iron Man* with David Michelinie and Bob Layton. It was during his first *Iron Man* break that Romita Jr. took on full-time art duties on *Amazing Spider-Man* for the first of multiple acclaimed runs. During his Spidey tenure he also helped launch *Dazzler* and penciled the first Marvel miniseries, *Marvel Super Hero Contest of Champions*. In 1983, Romita Jr. joined Chris Claremont's *Uncanny X-Men*, taking over the industry's most popular comic for a three-year run that saw his art dramatically evolve in tone. After a stint on the New Universe series *Starbrand*, he rebounded with a pair of *Amazing Spider-Man* issues that included Peter Parker's proposal to Mary Jane Watson. Next, Romita Jr. began a run on *Daredevil* with writer Ann Nocenti, introducing Typhoid Mary and establishing himself as one of the definitive *Daredevil* artists. After a third run on *Iron Man*, his credits included *Punisher War Zone*, *Daredevil: The Man Without Fear* with Frank Miller, a return to *Uncanny X-Men*, and long runs on *Spider-Man*, *Thor* and *Peter Parker: Spider-Man*. As the 2000s dawned, the ever more popular Romita Jr. kept adding to his superstar resume with stints on *Amazing Spider-Man* with J. Michael Straczynski, *Wolverine* with Mark Millar, *Eternals* with Neil Gaiman, and the *World War Hulk* event. His collaboration with Millar spawned their creator-owned series *Kick-Ass*, which led to a blockbuster feature film. In 2014, Romita moved to DC where his runs on *Superman* and *All-Star Batman* have topped sales charts. He returned to Marvel in 2021 ready to take on the House of Ideas' greatest characters once again.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

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## THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over America, a new storytelling medium was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States. At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary creators as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee.

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GOLDEN AGE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE MARVEL COMICS VOLS. 1-7
GOLDEN AGE MYSTIC COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE U.S.A. COMICS VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE YOUNG ALLIES VOLS. 1-2

## THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the Golden Age retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, the Atlas Era had it all!

ATLAS ERA BATTLEFIELD VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA BLACK KNIGHT/YELLOW CLAW VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA HEROES VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY VOLS. 1-4
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ATLAS ERA TALES TO ASTONISH VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA VENUS VOL. 1

## THE MARVEL AGE

In August 1961, change hit newsstands: *The Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. They were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves — and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different — the beginning of the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

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